NIGEL POVAH

CHESS *Training*

CADOGAN
CHESS

CADOGAN CHESS BOOKS

Chess Training

CADOGAN CHESS SERIES

Chief Adviser: Garry Kasparov
Editor: Andrew Kinsman
Russian Series Editor: Ken Neat

Other titles for the improving player include:

LEV ALBURT
Test and Improve Your Chess

YURI AVERBAKH
Chess Endings: Essential Knowledge

WILLIAM HARTSTON
How to Cheat at Chess

JULIAN HODGSON
Chess Travellers Quiz Book

DANIEL KING
How Good is Your Chess?

DANIEL KOPEC et al
Mastering Chess

STEWART REUBEN
Chess Openings – Your Choice

VLADIMIR VUKOVIC
The Art of Attack in Chess

SIMON WEBB
Chess for Tigers

BARUCH WOOD
Easy Guide to Chess

For a complete catalogue of CADOGAN CHESS books (which includes the Pergamon Chess and Maxwell Macmillan Chess lists) please write to:
Cadogan Books plc, London House, Parkgate Road, London SW11 4NQ
Tel: (0171) 738 1961 Fax: (0171) 924 5491

Chess Training

Nigel Povah

CADOGAN CHESS
LONDON, NEW YORK

CADOGAN BOOKS DISTRIBUTION

UK/EUROPE/AUSTRALASIA/ASIA/AFRICA
Distribution: Grantham Book Services Ltd, Isaac Newton Way, Alma Park Industrial Estate, Grantham, Lincs NG31 9SD.
Tel: (01476) 67421; Fax: (01476) 590223.

USA/CANADA/LATIN AMERICA/JAPAN
Distribution: Paramount Distribution Center, Front & Brown Streets, Riverside, New Jersey 08075, USA.
Tel: (609) 461 6500; Fax: (609) 764 9122.

Revised edition published 1995 by Cadogan Books plc, London House, Parkgate Road, London SW11 4NQ.

Copyright © Nigel Povah 1981, 1995

First published 1981 by Faber and Faber Ltd.

All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means: electronic, electrostatic, magnetic tape, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without permission in writing from the publishers.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 1 85744 170 2

Cover design by Brian Robins.

Printed in Great Britain by BPC Wheatons Ltd, Exeter.

Contents

	Introduction	page 11
	Algebraic Notation	13
	Preliminary General Advice	16
1.	Basic Endings	17
2.	Openings in Theory and Practice	35
3.	Basic Middle Game Features	56
4.	Pawn Structures and Pawn Weaknesses	72
5.	Tactical Complexities of the Middle Game	89
6.	More Complex Endings	111
7.	General Advice	141
8.	Chess Unlimited	171

Author's Note

I should like to express my deepest gratitude to Doris Hall for the conscientious way in which she typed my manuscript.

To
my family and friends

Introduction

The bookshops are full of chess books for beginners, children and young enthusiasts . . . so why write another?

The author hopes that *Chess Training* will not be regarded as 'just another chess book' for keen players wishing to learn the rudiments of the royal game. The inevitable and continuous improvements in standards of play throughout the chess population, make it imperative for the young ambitious player to have a book which will take him or her beyond a basic mastery of the rules and moves.

For this reason this book is primarily aimed at players in the age range of ten to fifteen years and/or the BCF (British Chess Federation) grading range 100–160 or the ELO/USCF range of 1400–1900. Such a player will often experience a period of several years (usually in the early teens) during which rapid progress is made. It is the author's object to guide players through this interesting phase by showing them which areas of chess are most relevant and worthy of study. It is also hoped that the young enthusiast will adopt a methodical approach to his or her studying, to save time and effort while improving results.

However, it should be noted that there is no reason why players outside the defined categories should not also derive considerable benefit from this book. For instance, chess teachers and coaches may find the contents and instruction techniques helpful in their own teaching situations.

The author hopes that with the use of this book an enthusiastic player will be able to take another step towards realizing his or her true potential. (Please note that from here on, the terms 'he' or 'his' are used instead of 'he/she' 'his/her', unless references are to specific individuals.)

N. E. POVAH
August 1994

Algebraic Notation

Today the algebraic system of notation is almost a universal standard. However, for hardened fans of English descriptive notation, or those who are not yet familiar with how to record the moves, the following explanation should help.

Algebraic notation uses a very simple cross-referencing system (as in map readings) in which each square on the board is given one, *and only* one, reference.

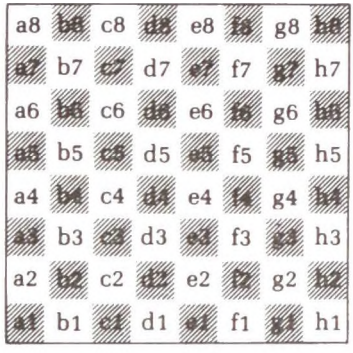


Diagram i

The references are determined by labelling the eight files (columns) with a different letter, from a–h, and the eight ranks (rows) with a different number, from 1–8, and then combining these two labels to form a separate reference for each square.

The board is always considered from White's point of view, and his pieces occupy ranks 1 and 2 at the beginning of the game. Hence, White will always be playing 'up the diagram' throughout the book.

The pieces are designated by *capital letters* as follows:

KING	=	K	BISHOP	=	B
QUEEN	=	Q	KNIGHT	=	N
ROOK	=	R	PAWN	=	(P)

It is more common to omit P for pawn, so the absence of a capital letter implies a pawn move.

NOMENCLATURE

x	captures or takes
O–O	castles on the king side
O–O–O	castles on the queen side
+	check
e.p.	en passant
!	good move
!!	very good move
?	bad move
??	very bad move
!?	interesting move
?!	dubious move
±	advantage to White
+ –	decisive advantage to White
∓	advantage to Black
– +	decisive advantage to Black
=	the position is equal
△	with the idea of
½–½	draw
1–0	White wins
0–1	Black wins
zugzwang	move-bound, forced into making a bad move
tempo	1 move (tempi, 2 or more moves)
fianchetto	when a bishop on knight's squares, b2, d2, b7 or g7, is surrounded by pawns
isolani	isolated pawn (IQP)

The following moves, written first in extended algebraic and second in descriptive, should give rise to the position in Diagram ii.

Play through the algebraic moves if you are unfamiliar with this form of notation.

	ALGEBRAIC		DESCRIPTIVE	
	White	Black	White	Black
1	e2–e4	e7–e5	P–K4	P–K4
2	Ng1–f3	Nb8–c6	N–KB3	N–QB3
3	Bf1–b5	a7–a6	B–N5	P–QR3
4	Bb5xc6	d7xc6	BxN	QPxN
5	O–O	f7–f6	O–O	P–B3
6	d2–d4	e5xd4	P–Q4	PxP
7	Nf3xd4	c6–c5	NxP	P–QB4
8	Nd4–b3	Qd8xd1	N–N3	QxQ
9	Rf1xd1	Bc8–d7	RxQ	B–Q2
10	Bc1–f4	O–O–O	B–B4	O–O–O

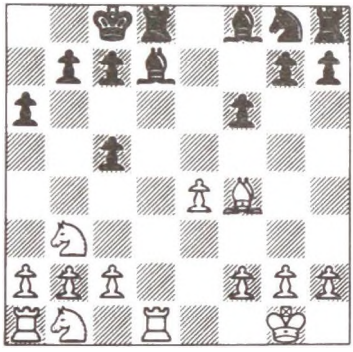


Diagram ii

As can be seen extended algebraic notation is much more precise and once mastered it is easy to use.

Throughout the rest of this book normal algebraic notation will be used, which simply involves a capital letter to designate the piece moved and a reference for the square of arrival. Using this method the above sequence of moves would be:

	White	Black		White	Black
1	e4	e5	6	d4	exd4
2	Nf3	Nc6	7	Nxd4	c5
3	Bb5	a6	8	Nb3	Qxd1
4	Bxc6	dxc6	9	Rxd1	Bd7
5	O–O	f6	10	Bf4	O–O–O

Note the marked decrease in the number of dashes, etc.

It is important that the reader makes sure that he or she is familiar with the above method of notation before continuing.

Preliminary General Advice

Although the penultimate chapter of the book also gives general advice, it is very important that certain habits and ideas are put into practice as soon as possible—hence the reason for putting this section here.

First, the keen aspirant should look round for a good local chess club to join; unfortunately, a few chess clubs do not adopt the policy of welcoming and encouraging younger members, but there are many clubs which provide plenty of competitive matches and a congenial atmosphere in which the student can improve his game.

Second, chess can and, to some extent, should be considered just like any other subject studied at school or college. The keen student should try to set aside a regular time for study and should try to maintain a steady routine, never forgetting that *chess is a game* which should always bring enjoyment.

Having established that regular study sessions are important, the student can then use this book as a source of study material and suggested study techniques. The conscientious student should get a maximum return for his efforts, and an important piece of advice, which is evident throughout the book, is to study as many Master games and to practise as much as possible for, as the saying goes, '*Practice makes perfect*'!

1 Basic Endings

Why should any player study endings? Such a question should not need to be asked; but unfortunately aspiring or established players too often tend to neglect this phase of the game. Many club players complete 30 or 36 moves in League chess, only to reach an ending which neither player knows how to assess—let alone play—and the usual remark is 'Oh well, the adjudicator can sort that one out!' This may be acceptable to a casual player, but the keen and ambitious player must know more.

There are two basic reasons why at least a fundamental knowledge of the endgame is necessary. First, during the course of a game various opportunities may arise to exchange pieces and it is necessary to know which endings are won or drawn in order to make the correct decision. Second, in games that are played to a finish the player should know the winning procedure in many different endgame positions: it is one thing to know that one has a won ending and another to be able to demonstrate the win.

An illustration of a player's failing to realize this first point was seen in the following example:

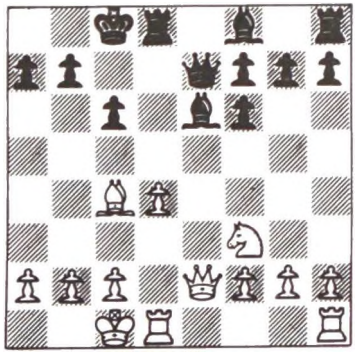


Diagram 1
G. D. Lee–A. Bernfield
London
1975

The diagrammed position was reached after White's 11th move in the game—G. D. Lee v A. Bernfield, London League, 1975. White has excellent winning chances in an ending, since Black's doubled f-pawns make it virtually impossible for him to create a king-side passed pawn, while White's effective majority on the queen side should allow him to create a passed pawn with excellent winning prospects. At the moment, however, Black has some compensation in the form of the two bishops in a reasonably open position. Clearly Black should avoid exchanges, but unfortunately he failed to appreciate the problems that awaited him in the ending and continued 11 . . . Bd5?! 12 Qxe7 Bxe7 13 Bxd5 Rxd5 14 Rhe1 Re8? This self-pin is clearly wrong, but Black is in difficulties anyway 15 Re2 Rdd8 16 Rde1 Kd7 17 c4. White prepares for the minor-piece ending, since Black cannot avoid the exchange of rooks if he is to activate his pieces—17 . . . Bd6 18 Rxe8 Rxe8 19 Rxe8 Kxe8 and White has obtained a clearly superior endgame, which he duly won on move 57.

Thus we can see the obvious dangers of totally neglecting the endgame. Some players avoid the disaster of our first illustration by learning which positions are won or drawn, but fail to study the techniques that are required to achieve the desired result. For instance, the Swedish Grandmaster Ulf Andersson has twice managed to win the theoretically drawn King, Rook and Bishop versus King and Rook ending, against opponents who certainly knew that the ending was drawn, but who failed to demonstrate the correct defensive technique.

A reasonable knowledge of endings has always formed an integral part of the Master's armoury. Today, even the average club player must spend some time studying this phase of the game; since leagues such as the London League (the strongest league in the country) encourage games to be played to a finish, and will not adjudicate until at least 60 moves have been played. Most weekend tournaments have also abandoned adjudications in favour of 'the blitz finish', which entails adding an additional amount of time (say, ten or fifteen minutes) to each player's clock once the first time control has been reached, when the players must then complete the game before one of them loses on time. Obviously in such a situation knowledge of endings will be beneficial. Having established that we cannot neglect endings, we can begin to familiarize ourselves with some of the fundamentals; let us start by examining what we shall call the elementary mates.

ELEMENTARY MATES

The starting-point for endings is the extra material (i.e. the bare minimum) required to force mate against a lone king, and for this purpose we shall assume that there are no pawns on the board.

1. King and Queen versus King

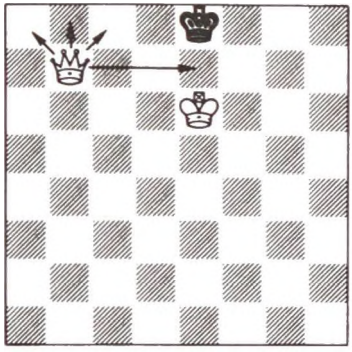


Diagram 2

This ending usually arises after the promotion of a pawn, when the winning procedure is very simple. The queen should be used to confine the enemy king to a small area of the board, such as the five squares (d8, e8, f8, g8 and h8) seen in Diagram 2. Then the white king is brought up to support the queen until we reach a position similar to that of the diagram, when the queen can deliver checkmate with four different moves. An important point to remember in this position is the danger of stalemating the lone king—a disaster which can easily be averted by always allowing the lone king at least two squares.

Consider the position—White: Ke1 Qd1, Black: Ke5. Play could continue—1 Qa4 Kd5 2 Kd2 Ke5 3 Ke3 Kd5 4 Qb5+Kd6 5 Ke4 Ke6 6 Qc6+Ke7 7 Kf5 Kd8 8 Qb7! (Not 8 Ke6? stalemate!) 8 . . . Ke8 9 Ke6 Kf8 10 Qf7 mate.

2. King and Two Rooks versus King

An even easier win than with a queen, since the two rooks mate on their own without the help of the king. This helps to show that two co-operating rooks are slightly better than a queen.

Consider the following position—White: Ke1 Ra1 Rh1, Black: Ke5. Play might continue—1 Rh4 confining the king 1 . . . Kf5 the king rushes to attack the rook, since rooks *operate best at a distance* 2 Ra5+ Kg6 3 Rb4! maintaining maximum distance from the king without interfering with the other rook 3 . . . Kf6 4 Rb6+ Ke7 5 Ra7+ Kd8 6 Rb8 mate.

3. King and Rook versus King

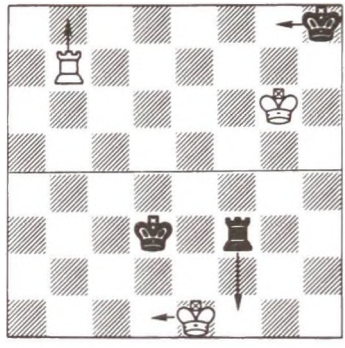


Diagram 3

Here White must use waiting tactics in order to drive the black king back by checking from the side, when the kings are opposite. This can only be achieved by the kings being a knight's move apart with the black king being forced to move opposite, when the white rook would give check. Eventually a mating set-up similar to those in Diagram 3 will be achieved. In the top half of the diagram, Black must play . . . Kg8, since his king is restricted by the edge of the board when White mates with Rb8; whereas in the bottom half of the diagram White must play Kd1 (Since his king is restricted by the rook) allowing Rf1 mate.

Consider the position—White: Ke1 Rh1, Black: Ke5. Play might continue—1 Ke2 Kf4 2 Kd3 (inviting 2 . . . Kf3 when 3 Rf1+ Kg2 4 Rf4 would leave the black king severely restricted, e.g. 4 . . . Kg3 5 Ke3 Kg2 6 Rg4+ Kf1 7 Rg3! waiting for 7 . . . Ke1 8 Rg1 mate) 2 . . . Ke5 3 Rf1 Kd5 (3 . . . Ke6 4 Kd4 loses ground without a fight) 4 Rf5+ Ke6 5 Ke4 Kd6 6 Rh5 Kc6 7 Kd4 Kb6 8 Kc4 Ka6? (8 . . . Kc6 9 Rh6+ Kd7 10 Kd5 would allow Black to prolong the agony) 9 Rb5! There are four edges to the chess-board equally effective in assisting with the mating process! 9 . . . Ka7 10 Kc5 Ka6 11Kc6 Ka7 12 Kc7 Ka6 13 Rc5 Ka7 14 Ra5 mate.

4. King and Two Bishops versus King

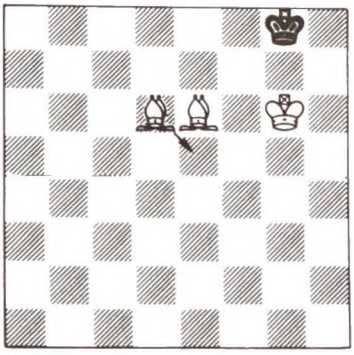


Diagram 4

Due to the fine co-ordination of the two bishops on an open board, the black king is soon driven into a corner and one waiting move is all that is needed to administer mate. In the position—White: Ke1, Bc1, Bf1, Black: Ke5. Play could continue—1 Bd3 Kd4 2 Kd2 Kd5 3 Kc3 Ke5 4 Kc4—notice the impenetrable barrier formed by the two bishops along the b1–h7 and c1–h6 diagonals—4 . . . Kd6 5 Bf4+ Kc6 6 Bf5 Kb6 7 Bd7 Ka5 8 Kc5 Ka6 9 Bc7 Kb7 10 Bb6 Kb8 (not 10 . . . Ka6? allowing 11 Bc8 mate) 11 Kc6 Ka8 12 Bg1 (not 12 Kc7? stalemate!) Kb8 13 Kb6 Ka8 14 Bh3 the 'waiting move'—since the black king must be 'checked into the corner' for the knockout blow—14 . . . Kb8 15 Bh2+ Ka8 16 Bg2 mate. It is worth noting that only three checks were given and, in fact, the mate could have been administered with only the last two checks, which are always necessary.

5. King, Bishop and Knight versus King

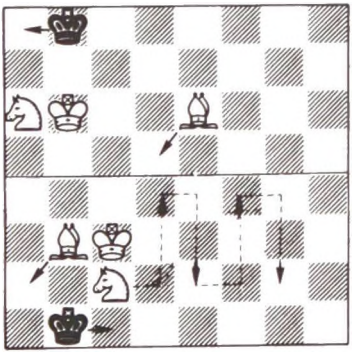


Diagram 5

Here the black king must be driven into a corner of the same colour as that on which the bishop operates, to get a final mating position similar to that given in the top half of Diagram 5. Driving the king back is usually a two-stage process: (i) forcing the king to the edge of the board and normally the wrong-coloured corner, since the king will naturally avoid the 'correct' corner; (ii) driving the king along the edge of the board from one corner to the other. The first stage, although not as easy as with two bishops, is none the less not too difficult.

The second stage can be quite tricky and a useful tip worth remembering is the pattern of knight moves indicated in the bottom half of Diagram 5. Play from this position continues—1 Bc4 waiting for the black king to move towards the correct corner—h1. 1 . . . Kc1 2 Ba2 Kd1 3 Nd4 Ke1 (3 . . . Kc1 4 Ne2+ is similar) 4 Kd3 Kf2 (4 . . . Kd1 5 Ne2 is again similar) 5 Ne2 Kg2 6 Be6! Kf3 7 Bd7 winning a tempo 7 . . . Kf2 (7 . . . Kg2 8 Ke3 is no better) 8 Bc6 Ke1 9 Ke3 Kd1 10 Ba4+ Ke1 11 Nf4 Kf1 12 Bb3—another waiting move—Ke1 13 Ng2+ Kf1 14 Kf3 Kg1 15 Kg3 Kf1 16 Bc4+ Kg1 17 Nf4 Kh1 18 Bd3—this final waiting move allows White to give a knight check, driving the king into the corner, followed by the decisive bishop check . . . 18 . . . Kg1 19 Nh3+ Kh1 20 Be4 mate.

The above method is not the quickest way to mate, but it has the advantage that a player should readily be able to recognize positions which arise in the mating procedure.

Diagram 6 shows a position from a game of Nilsen–Lee, Post Office Team Tournament, 1977:

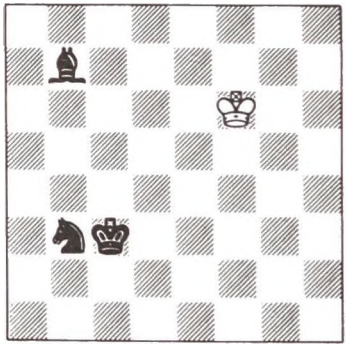


Diagram 6
Nilsen–Lee
Post Office
Team Tournament
1977

Play continued—51 Ke5 Nc5 52 Kf6 Kd4 53 Kf5 Be4+ 54 Kf6 Kd5 55 Kf7 Ke5 56 Ke7 Bd5 57 Ke8 Ke6 (57 . . . Kf6!) 58 Kf8 Kf6 59 Ke8 Be4 (preparing to start from the beginning of the above analysis, e.g. 60 Kf8 Nd7+ 61 Kg8 Ne5 62 Kh8 Nf7+ 63 Kg8 Bf5, etc.—however 59 . . . Bc4! was quicker) 60 Kd8 Ke6 61 Kc7 Nd7 when White finds himself in a mating net similar to that reached after 8 Bc6 in the above example; White resigned on move 72.

6. King and Two Knights versus King

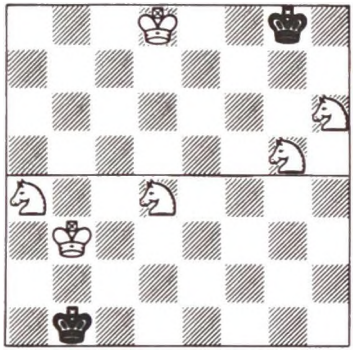


Diagram 7

Here there is no way to *force* mate. In the top half of Diagram 7 Black simply avoids 1 . . . Kf8?? 2 Ne6 mate by playing either 1 . . . Kg7 or 1 . . . Kh8. Similarly in the bottom half of the diagram after 1 Nc3+ Black should play 1 . . . Kc1 with no problems, but not 1 . . . Ka1?? 2 Nc2 mate. Basically the defending king will always have a choice of at least two squares and the right choice should always lead to safety. These last three minor-piece situations have demonstrated the superiority of a bishop over a knight on an open board—mate with two bishops is fairly easy, while bishop and knight is fairly tricky, whereas with two knights it cannot be forced.

This concludes the survey of the elementary mates and we are now ready to consider king and pawn endings.

KING AND PAWN ENDINGS

We consider king and pawn endings in this chapter because they are among the easiest endings to play, but that is not to say that these endings are without hidden resources.

The objective of all king and pawn endings is to 'queen' a pawn when the win is usually straightforward, so an extra pawn quite often proves to be decisive. But we must consider a variety of different positions, based on the relative position of the two kings, in order to come to terms with the basic principles which apply in such endings.

The Square

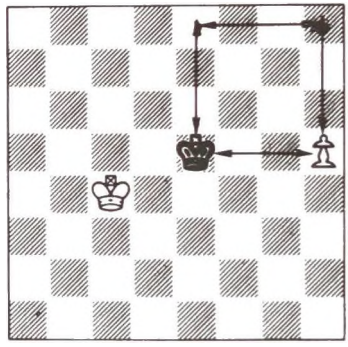


Diagram 8

First we consider a straight race between the pawn and the enemy king. Play from Diagram 8 could continue—1 h6 Kf6 2 h7 Kg7 when the pawn is lost. It can quickly be seen if the king can stop the pawn in this way by imagining a square as shown in the diagram: the king must be within the square; otherwise the pawn queens.

Two special features need to be noted:

(i) the square of a pawn on the second rank is the same as that of a pawn on the third, due to the pawn's right to move two squares on its first move.

(ii) the presence of other pawns on the board may impede the king's entrance into the 'square' of the passed pawn in question. Troitsky (1913) composed a beautiful study to illustrate this theme:

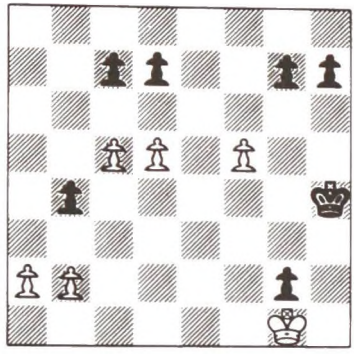


Diagram 9
Troitsky
1913

White has a potential passed pawn on the a–file, but first he must capture the pawn on g2 otherwise Black mates with . . . Kg3 followed by . . . h5–h4–h3–h2 mate. However, the immediate 1 Kxg2? allows 1 . . . Kg5 2 a4 bxa3 e.p. 3 bxa3 Kf6 (not 3 . . . Kxf5? 4 a4 Ke5 5 d6! cxd6 6 c6! dxc6 7 a5 Kd5—the only move to keep in the 'square' but after 8 a6 Black cannot play 8 . . . Kc6, and the pawn queens) 4 a4 Ke7 5 a5 Kd8 when Black stops the a-pawn and goes on to win. Thus, the correct winning procedure is—1 f6! gxf6 when the h4–d8 diagonal is blocked 2 Kxg2 Kg5 3 a4 bxa3 e.p. 4 bxa3 Kf5 5 a4 Ke5 6 d6! (6 c6 also wins) 6 . . . cxd6 7c6! dxc6 8 a5 and the pawn cannot be stopped.

Another example where the principle of the square is relevant can be seen in the following case: White—Kh3 Pa3, Black—Ka2 Pf3. White to play appears to be winning after 1 a4 since the black king cannot catch the white pawn, while the white king is already in the square of the black pawn. But this situation is illusory and with correct play the result is a draw—1 . . . Kb3 2 a5 Kc4! 3 a6 (3 Kg3 Kb5=) 3 . . . Kd3! 4 a7 (4 Kg3 Ke3 5 a7 f2 6 a8=Q f1=Q with a draw) 4 . . . f2 and both sides promote.

Black managed to draw by threatening to enter the square of the a-pawn while simultaneously rushing over to support the advance of his f-pawn.

Pawn on the Sixth Rank

We logically come to the conclusion that in many positions the pawn requires the support of its own king if it is to promote. Support from the king, however, is not a guarantee of victory; consider the following diagram:

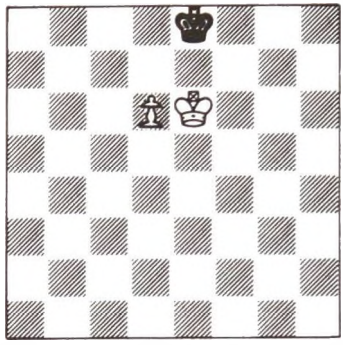


Diagram 10

The result of this position, as with many king and pawn endings, is determined by whose turn it is to move. With White to play, the result is a draw since 1 d7+ Kd8 2 Kd6 is stalemate, and king retreats do not help: 1 Ke5 Kd7 2 Kd5 Kd8! (other moves lose, such as 2 . . . Ke8? 3 Ke6 or 3 Kc6, winning in either case after 4 d7) 3 Ke6 (3 Kc6 Kc8 is just the same) 3 . . . Ke8 and White has made no progress.

However, with Black to play, White wins after 1 . . . Kd8 2 d7 Kc7 3 Ke7 since White has achieved a major objective of controlling the 'queening' square. White should make sure that he reaches Diagram 10 with Black to move.

The Opposition

White has a better chance of achieving the aforementioned objectives if he remembers to keep his king *in front of his pawn*, while making use of a principle called 'the opposition'.

To understand the opposition it will help to consider the position on the left-hand side of Diagram 11:

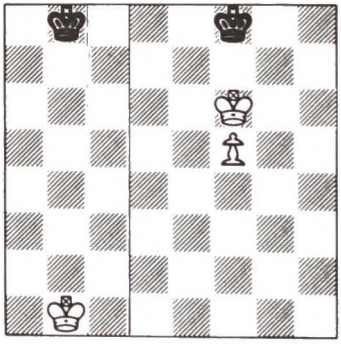


Diagram 11

It may come as a surprise to discover that the white king can force his way through to either a8 or c8 by using only the a, b and c files. Thus—1 Kb2 Kb7 2 Kb3 Kb6 3 Kb4—White has obtained the opposition since the kings are directly opposed and neither can advance; Black, however, is to move and must either retreat voluntarily or step aside, e.g. 3 . . . Ka6 4 Kc5—Black has stepped aside so White can bypass 4 . . . Kb7 (4 . . . Ka7 5 Kc6 and White's king marches on) 5 Kb5 White obtains the opposition again, since it is Black to play, who must retreat. 5 . . . Kc7 6 Ka6 Kb8 7 Kb6 opposition! 7 . . . Kc8 8 Ka7 Kc7 9 Ka8.

To understand the opposition more clearly, look again at Diagram 11 and consider the following sequence where Black does not advance immediately—1 Kb2 Ka8 2 Kb3 Kb7 3 Kb4 Kb6 when *Black* has obtained the opposition (since it is White to move) and White can make no progress, e.g. 4 Ka4 Ka6 5 Kb4 Kb6 6 Kc4 Kc6. *Hence a player is said to have the opposition when the kings are opposing and it is his opponent's turn to move.*

With correct play from the diagram, White can take and hold the opposition throughout, if he remembers two points:
(a) when Black's king moves to a square on the centre file (in this case the b-file), then White moves on to a square of the *same* colour on the same file.
(b) If Black goes sideways to the a or c file, then White should advance to the other file. This is known as *bypassing*. Therefore, 1 Kb2 Ka8 2 Kc3 bypassing 2 . . . Kb7 3 Kb3!—obtaining the *distant* opposition—3 . . . Kc8 4 Ka4 still bypassing; 4 . . . Kc7 5 Ka5 Kb7 6 Kb5 Kb8 7 Kb6 when White reaches a8 or c8.

To see why the opposition is so important, consider the right-hand side of Diagram 11. If it is Black's turn to move (i.e. White has the opposition), then the win is easy—1 . . . Ke8 2 Kg7 or 1 . . . Kg8 2 Ke7 when in both cases the pawn is shepherded home by the white king. With White to move (Black having the opposition) play might continue—1 Ke6 Ke8 (other moves allow 2 Ke7 + −) 2 f6 winning since White has now gained the opposition and has a position similar to that of Diagram 10—2 . . . Kf8 3 f7 Kg7 4 Ke7 wins.

In order to reach this winning position in the right-hand side of Diagram 11, White must first use the opposition to push back the black king and, only then, advance his pawn; otherwise the pawn will interfere with the white king and Black will gain the opposition.

Consider, for instance, the two situations in Diagram 12:

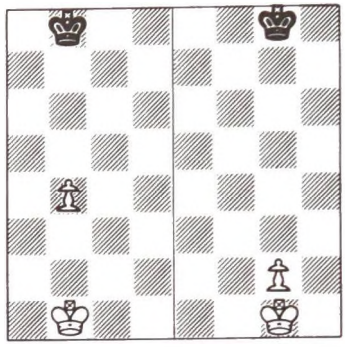


Diagram 12

On the left-hand side of the diagram White's pawn is already on the fourth rank and the white king has no chance of getting in front of the pawn in order to win the opposition. Play might continue—1 Kb2 Kb7 2 Kb3 gaining the distant opposition 2 . . . Kb6 (now White cannot keep the opposition since he cannot play Kb4) 3 Kc4 Kc6—Black has gained the opposition and White must give up all hope of getting his king in front of the pawn—4 b5+ Kb6 5 Kb4 Kb7! regaining the opposition 6 Ka5 Ka7 7 b6+ Kb7 8 Kb5 Kb8!—other moves lose—9 Kc6 (9 Ka6 Ka8 also draws) 9 . . . Kc8 when Black has achieved a similar position to Diagram 10 with White to move, hence a draw. In this example we saw the interference of the pawn with White's attempts at maintaining the opposition: if we now consider the right-hand side of Diagram 12 we get a different picture—1 Kf2 Kf8—maintaining distant opposition 2 Kg3 Kg7 3 Kg4 Kg6 when Black has kept the opposition, but White has a pawn! 4 g3! Now the boot is on the other foot and Black must concede ground 4 . . . Kg7 5 Kg5 Kf7 6 Kh6! (bypassing, but not 6 g4? Kg7 when Black has regained the opposition and would draw) 6 . . . Kg8 (6 . . . Kf6 7 g4 Kf7 transposes) 7 g4 Kf7 (7 . . . Kh8 8 g5 Kg8 9 Kg6 transposes) 8 g5 Kg8 (8 . . . Kf8 9 Kh7 wins) 9 Kg6, when White has achieved the winning position shown on the right-hand side of Diagram 11.

Having considered those two examples we should note that, in the first case, White could not get his king in front of his pawn and had to be content with a draw, whereas, in the second case, he did manage to get his king in front of the pawn but found that he had lost the opposition. Fortunately he had a pawn move with which to regain the opposition. Logically we should consider the following position with the pawn on the third rank—White: Ke1 Pe3, Black: Ke8. Play

would continue—1 Ke2 Ke7 (gaining the opposition since White cannot play 2 Ke3) 2 Kf3 Kf7! 3 Kf4 Kf6 4 Ke4 Ke6 when Black has the opposition and White has no pawn move with which to obtain the opposition, therefore White can no longer keep his king in front of the pawn if he is to make progress, e.g. 5 Kd4 Kd6 6 e4 Ke6 7 e5 Ke7 8 Kd5 Kd7 9 e6+ Ke7 10 Ke5 Ke8! with a draw.

SOME GENERAL THEMES

Now we must consider some general cases within king and pawn endings, in order to complete our initial study of these instructive endings.

1. King and Rook's Pawn versus King

Rook's pawns are often regarded as a curse in many endings, since they frequently prove impossible to promote. The reason for this is that the inferior side can use the defensive resource of stalemate. Consider the case—White: Kg6 Ph6, Black: Kh8. White to move cannot force the black king out of the corner, while 1 h7 stalemate's Black immediately. Black to move would simply play 1 . . . Kg8 2 h7+ Kh8 when White must either give stalemate with 3 Kh6 or lose his pawn.

Therefore, in order to draw against a rook's pawn, the defending king simply needs to get (or be able to get) on to the queening square. Whenever possible the white king should try to prevent the black king from getting into the corner. Consider the position in Diagram 13:

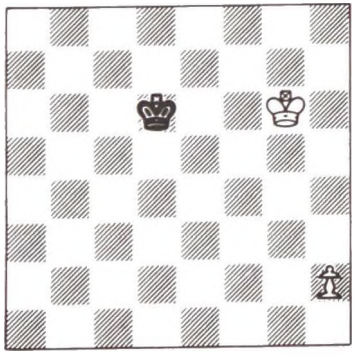


Diagram 13

Black to move plays—1 . . . Ke7 but White must not play 2 h4? Kf8 3 Kh7 (3 h5 Kg8 draws easily since 4 . . . Kh8 cannot be prevented) 3 . . . Kf7 4 h5 Kf8 5 h6 (White must not allow . . . Kg8 followed by . . . Kh8) 5 . . . Kf7 6 Kh8 Kf8 7 h7 (7 Kh7 Kf7 draws by repetition) 7 . . . Kf7 and Black has stalemated White! Instead of 2 h4? White wins easily with 2 Kg7! Ke6 3 h4 Kf5 4 h5 Kg5 5 h6 and the pawn goes through safely.

2. The 'Outside' Passed Pawn

The outside passed pawn normally confers a substantial advantage in king and pawn endings. By the term 'outside' we mean that the pawn in question is away from the main body of pawns, quite often on the other side of the board.

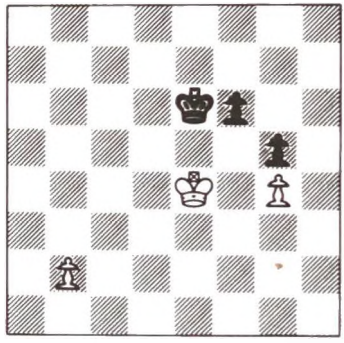


Diagram 14

For instance, in Diagram 14 White has an outside passed pawn on b2. Although material is level White's advantage is clear, since he can use his outside passed pawn as a decoy to distract the black king from his defensive duties—1 b4 Kd6 2 Kf5 Ke7 3 b5 Kd6 (3 . . . Kf7? would take the black king out of 'the square' of White's passed pawn) 4 Kxf6 Kc5 5 Kxg5 Kxb5 when the white b-pawn, although lost, has done his job of distracting the black king, leaving White with a simple win.

Another example of the power of the outside passed pawn can be seen in Diagram 15:

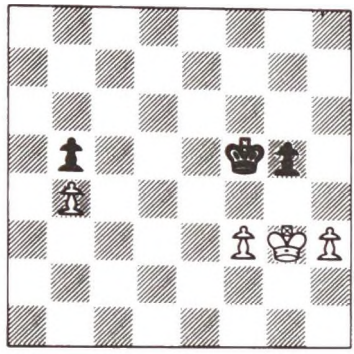


Diagram 15

White has an extra pawn, but at the moment no passed pawns; which move should he play—1 h4, 1 f4 or 1 Kg2? In fact the best move is 1 f4! sacrificing the extra pawn to obtain an outside passed pawn, e.g. 1 . . . gxf4+ 2 Kf3 Kg5 3 h4+ Kxh4 with an easy win, for White's king is closer to the remaining pawns. The immediate 1 Kg2 doesn't seem to achieve anything after 1 . . . Ke5, while 1 h4? is positively suicidal after 1 . . . gxh4+ 2 Kxh4 Kf4 3 Kh5 Kxf3 4 Kg5 Ke4 when it is the black king who reaches the queen-side pawns first.

3. The 'Protected' Passed Pawn

A passed pawn is always a useful asset, so much so that Nimzovich in his excellent book *My System* remarked that, 'the passed pawn is a criminal, who should be kept under lock and key. Mild measures, such as police surveillance, are not sufficient.' By this he meant that one of the defending pieces needs to attend ('blockade') the imposing pawn. In a king and pawn ending, only the king can fulfil this task; consequently a passed pawn grows in stature as exchanges occur. The advantage of the passed pawn, however, is less effective if it requires the defensive support of its own king, who would much rather be able to roam the board in pursuit of vulnerable pawns.

The protected passed pawn who enjoys the support of one of his fellow pawns is an even greater asset. For instance, consider Diagram 16:

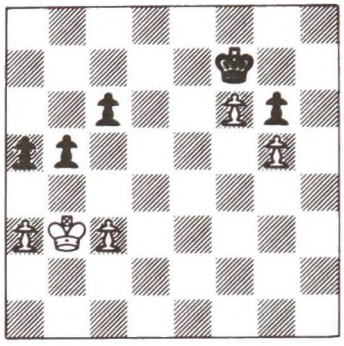


Diagram 16

White has a protected passed pawn on f6 which ties the black king down to a purely defensive role, while the white king is able to attack and dissolve Black's queen-side pawn majority thus 1 a4 Ke6 2 axb5 (not 2 c4? b4 when both sides would have protected passed pawns and neither side could do anything, hence a draw) 2 . . . cxb5 3 c4 bxc4+ (if 3 . . . b4 then 4 c5 leaves Black the impossible task of stopping both passed pawns, e.g. 4 . . . Kd5 5f7 wins) 4 Kxc4 Kf7 (Black cannot attack the supporting g-pawn because the f-pawn would be free to run—4 . . . Kf5? 5 f7 wins) 5 Kb5 a4 6 Kxa4 Ke6; having demolished the queen-side pawns White must now make use of his extra pawn on the king side.

Normally this is straightforward, with the white king supporting the advance of the passed pawn, or alternatively winning Black's remaining pawn. The resulting position from our example —although winning—is rather tricky:

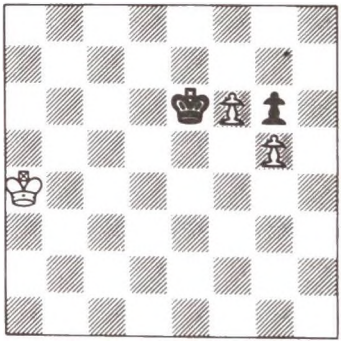


Diagram 17

7 Kb5 Kd7 8 Kc5 Ke6 9 Kc6 Kf7 10 Kd7 Kf8 11 Ke6 (11 Kd6 Kf7 doesn't help) 11 . . . Ke8 12 f7+ Kf8 13 Kd6! (not 13 Kf6 stalemating); White sacrifices the advanced f-pawn to gain the opposition, win the black g-pawn and then to escort his own pawn home by achieving the winning position on the right-hand side of Diagram 11; 13 . . . Kxf7 14 Kd7! 'horizontal opposition' 14 . . . Kf8 15 Ke6 Kg7 16 Ke7 Kg8 17 Kf6 Kh7 18 Kf7 Kh8 19 Kxg6 Kg8 20 Kh6 Kh8 21 g6 Kg8 22 g7 Kf7 23 Kh7 wins.

4. Effective versus Ineffective Pawn Majorities

Quite often positions arise when the players have an equal number of pawns, but the balance is different; if, for instance one player has a majority on one wing and the other player has a majority on the other wing. Sometimes one of these majorities will be more effective than the other, and this can be enough to win a game. Let us consider Diagram 18 which could arise from the following sequence of moves—1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Bxc6 dxc6 5 O–O f6 6 d4 Bg4 7 dxe5 Qxd1 8 Rxd1 fxe5 9 Rd3 Bxf3 10 Rxf3 Nf6 11 Nc3 Bb4 12 Bg5 Bxc3 13 bxc3 Rf8 (if 13 . . . Nxe4 14 Re1!±) 14 Bxf6 Rxf6 15 Rxf6 gxf6 16 Rd1. So far, Fischer–Smyslov, Monaco 1967, when Smyslov continued 16 . . . Ke7 and after a long hard struggle managed to draw. Many players might challenge White's control of the d-file by 16 . . . Rd8 when 17 Rxd8+ Kxd8 gives our diagrammed position:

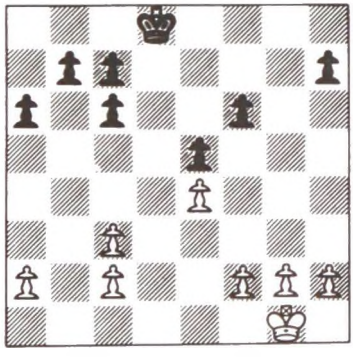


Diagram 18

Although material is level, this position is a simple win for White who has an effective 4 versus 3 pawn majority on the king side. Black on the other hand, has an ineffective 4 v 3 majority on the queen side, despite the fact that White has doubled c-pawns. Play might con-

tinue—18 f4! exf4 (18 . . . Ke7 19 fxe5 fxe5 when White has a potential outside passed pawn which should prove to be decisive) 19 Kf2 Ke7 20 Kf3 Ke6 21 Kxf4 b5 (21 . . . h5 22 h4 intending g4 creating a passed h-pawn) 22 g4 c5 23 h4 b4 24 c4 (24 e5 also wins, but not 24 cxb4? undoubling Black's c-pawns and giving him the chance to create a queen-side passed pawn) 24 . . . a5—notice the pawn on c7 is useless. White now makes a temporary pawn sacrifice to create an outside passed pawn. 25 e5! fxe5+ (if 25 . . . c6 26 exf6 Kxf6 27 g5+ Kg6 28 Kg4 Kf7—not 28 . . . h5+ 29 Kf4 with a decisive protected passed pawn—29 Kf5 Kg7 30 h5 Kf7 31 Ke5 Ke7 32 g6 hxg6 33 hxg6 a4 34 g7 Kf7 35 Kd6 and White demolishes Black's remaining pawns) 26 Ke4 a4 27 g5 (not 27 h5? h6 when White's majority is crippled!) 27 . . . c6 28 h5 a3 29 g6 hxg6 30 hxg6 (if Black's king were on d6 then White could win without recapturing, i.e. 30 h6 Ke6 31 h7 wins) 30 . . . Kf6 31 g7 Kxg7 32 Kxe5 Kf7 33 Kd6 and the black king can only look on as White mops up the queen side. This elementary, although prolonged, win was never in doubt once the last pair of rooks were exchanged, due to Black's inability to create a queen-side passed pawn.

This example concludes our examination of basic endings, but the reader is urged to continue his studies of such endings: it was such a knowledge of the resulting king and pawn ending that enabled Smyslov to avert the disaster of our last example by avoiding the exchange of rooks. For this purpose the reader is advised to refer to more specialized books on endings, since it has been possible to give only brief coverage of a highly detailed and important area.

2 Openings in Theory and Practice

Chess is a game which can conveniently be divided into three stages:

1. the opening
2. the middle game
3. the endgame

Most beginners and novices are aware of this subdivision but they are not always able to identify the borders between the stages. Normally we consider the opening phase as the period of the game when both players try to develop all or most of their minor pieces (knights and bishops) and perhaps some of their major pieces (queens and rooks). Castling to find a safe haven for the king is another important priority in the opening. Ideally these objectives should be carried out with as few pawn moves as possible; hence Lasker's maxim, 'In the opening one or two pawn moves not more'. This quote must, however, be taken loosely, but not too loosely!

Before examining opening classifications and the underlying principles, we should consider the question 'Why do so many players spend much time in studying openings?' The answer is very simple—every time you sit down to play a game you will naturally get an opening, but not necessarily a middle game and even less likely, an endgame. Nevertheless, this does not imply that one should neglect the other phases of the game: what is the point of playing a superb opening and gaining a useful initiative if one does not know how to capitalize on this in either the middle game or endgame?

So now we turn our attention to the basic principles of the opening which are:

1. development
2. central control
3. king safety

It should be noted that these three concepts are frequently related, since a lead in development will often mean greater central control and may well provide greater protection to your own king, while presenting a threat to the enemy king.

Our first game illustrates the dangers of treating the opening principles with contempt.

Game 1

	White	Black
1	e4	e5
2	Nf3	Nc6
3	Bc4	

The 'Giuoco Piano' which is Italian for 'quiet game'—an exciting opening which usually leads to anything but a quiet game!

3 . . . h6?

Black breaks an opening principle, by playing an unnecessary pawn move which does not aid his development. More natural was either 3 . . . Bc5 or 3 . . . Nf6 (the Two Knights defence).

4 O–O

Notice the economy of White's development; in four moves he has moved two pieces and castled, making only one, very constructive, pawn move.

4 . . . d6?!

A reasonable move but ill-timed. Black should play 4 . . . Bc5 and then 5 . . . d6, so as not to trap his black-squared bishop behind the pawns.

5 Nc3 a6?

Another totally unprovoked pawn move which wastes valuable time. 5 . . . Nf6 was much better followed by . . . Be7 and . . . O–O.

6 Re1

This move may appear to be rather strange, but it is quite logical. White envisages a position where the centre pawns will be exchanged off thereby exposing the black king who has yet to escape from the centre—consequently the rook is lined up against the king.

6 . . . b5?

Again wasting time, but also committing the sin of permanently

weakening the queen side, and to no good effect. Remember, 'PAWN MOVES MUST BE CAREFULLY THOUGHT OUT, FOR THEY CAN NEVER BE RETRACTED.'

7 Bb3

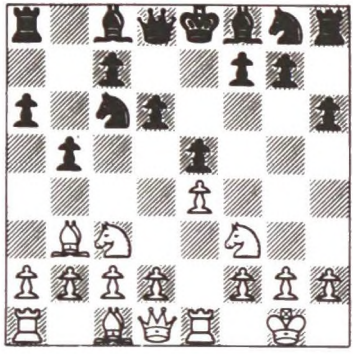


Diagram 19

7 Bd5 is also good, e.g. 7 . . . Bb7 8 d4! When your opponent leaves his king in the centre, it is sensible to try to exchange off central pawns to open up the position thus—8 . . . exd4 9 Nxd4 Qd7 (Not 9 . . . Nxd4 10 Bxb7 when White wins material) 10 e5! consistent with the aforementioned plan 10 . . . dxe5 (10 . . . O–O–O 11 e6! is decisive for White) 11 Nxc6 Bxc6 12 Rxe5+ Be7 13 Qf3 Bxd5 14 Nxd5 when Black has problems completing his development, as the following variations demonstrate:

(a) 14 . . . O–O–O? 15 Nxe7+! Nxe7 (15 . . . Kb8 16 Nc6+ + –) 16 Qa8 mate.

(b) 14 . . . Nf6? 15 Nxe7 + –

(c) 14 . . . c6? 15 Nb6 Qc7 16 Rxe7+! Nxe7 (16 . . . Qxe7 17 Qxc6+ wins) 17 Nxa8 Qb7 18 Qg3! Qxa8 19 Qxg7 Rg8 20 Qxh6 c5 threatening mate on g2 21 Qh3 with a clear cut material advantage. Although in this variation White appears to have neglected the development of his bishop and rook, it was well justified and is easily remedied by Bf4 followed by Re1 with an excellent game.

(d) 14 . . . Rd8 15 Bd2! intending Bb4 and Rae1 with overwhelming pressure against e7, e.g. 15 . . . f6 16 Qh5+ Kf8 17 Nf4! threatening both Ne6+ and Ng6+) 17 . . . fxe5 18 Ng6+ Kf7 (18 . . . Ke8? 19 Nxe5+ g6 20 Qxg6+ Kf8 21 Qf7 mate) 19 Nxe5+ Ke6 20 Nxd7 with an easy win because of White's material advantage of queen and pawn versus rook and knight as well as Black's exposed king.

7 . . . Na5?

Black breaks yet another opening principle by moving a piece (in this case his only developed piece!) for a second time; this would be an acceptable idea if Black had completed his development but in this position it is unforgivable!

8 d4 Nxb3

By making this capture Black loses a move, for the white bishop had only moved twice while the black knight had moved three times—thereby giving White an extra tempo (move). On the plus side the black knight did little on a5 and Black now has the advantage of the two bishops, but in this position White's lead in development and control of the centre are far more decisive factors.

9 axb3

There is a useful rule of thumb worth remembering:
Capture towards the centre when you have a choice because this enhances central control and often rids one of annoying rook's pawns which can prove to be a handicap in the ending, but more of that later.

9 . . . exd4
10 Qxd4

White can safely develop the queen on this strong central square since his development is nearly complete and she is difficult to attack; 10 . . . c5 is, for instance, the only move to threaten the queen, and this would be anti-positioned, for it would create a weak square on d5 as well as creating a backward pawn on d6.

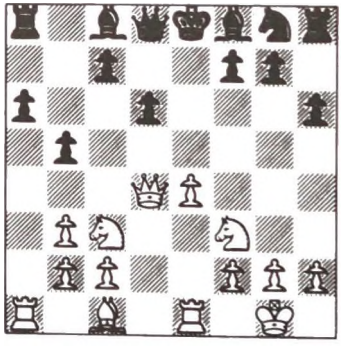


Diagram 20

In the diagrammed position White enjoys a substantial lead in development, control of the centre and more space in general. He also has the tactical threat of 11 Nxb5 winning a pawn, since the black pawn on a6 is pinned to the undefended rook on a8 by White's rook on a1.

This example illustrates two extremes—White's economical and efficient development as opposed to Black's non-existent development, due to his failure to comply with the opening principles.

In fact Black managed to break almost every opening principle in only 10 moves! First he neglected the development of his pieces, second he failed to control or contest the centre; third he controls less space since he has fewer open lines for his pieces than White; finally he has failed to castle, consequently his king is in jeopardy.

On the other hand, White's development is almost complete and we can regard the opening phase as virtually over. Now White must plan his middle game strategy, and this will be considered in a later chapter.

We shall now examine the different opening concepts one by one with appropriate examples.

DEVELOPMENT

Chess is a game which relates time (in terms of moves) with space (the 64 squares). Consequently it is criminal to waste time in the opening because each move should be seen as an opportunity to control more squares.

Efficient development should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Develop *all* your pieces quickly and effectively; do not attempt to attack with just one or two pieces developed.
2. Do not move a piece more than once in the opening until you have completed your development, unless of course, you stand to gain a material or positional advantage, without compromising your position.
3. Do not make unnecessary pawn moves in the opening unless, again, it is to your advantage.
4. Be wary of snatching pawns in the opening if, as a result, your development is hindered while your opponent's development is enhanced.

The next example illustrates the dangers of neglecting one's development by making too many unnecessary pawn moves.

Game 2
White: Dr E. N. Bramley (Berkshire) Inter-county Championship,
Black: N. E. Povah (Surrey) 1977

1 c4

The English opening, which is normally regarded as a quiet method of opening the game, White intends to play on the flanks and normally leaves his centre pawns (e2 and d2) unmoved, so the need for early castling is not so critical.

1 . . . e5
2 Nc3 Nf6
3 g3 Bb4
4 Bg2 O–O

Both players have developed sensibly so far, but now White plays a dubious pawn move which slows his development and also weakens the white squares. 5 Nf3 is regarded as best.

5 e3?! Bxc3!

A logical capture doubling White's pawns before Nge2 (connecting the knights) can be played. Furthermore, as Black wishes to attack on the white squares, it is logical to exchange a piece which moves exclusively on black squares for one which can defend the white squares.

6 bxc3 e4!

Immediately exploiting the white square weakens with the intention Nb8–c6–e5–d3 or f3.

7 f3?!

White continues to neglect his development and, instead of moving only three pawns, he now has only three unmoved! Alternatives are difficult to find, however, e.g. 7 d4 exd3 e.p. leaves White with doubled isolated c-pawns; 7 Nge2 Nc6 8 O–O improves White's development, but does little to solve the problem of the weak white squares after 8 . . . Ne5.

7 . . . Re8
8 Qc2?

White should play 8 fxe4 Nxe4 9 Nf3 followed by O–O with approximate equality. The move played puts the queen on a vulnerable square and allows Black to accelerate his development with tactical tricks.

8 . . . d5!
9 cxd5

White has undoubled his pawns, but Black does not recapture immediately.

9 . . . Bf5!
10 fxe4 Nxe4

Black threatened 10 . . . exf3 11 Qxf5 fxg2 winning. Now the threat is 11 . . . Nxg3 winning the exchange

11 d3 Nc5

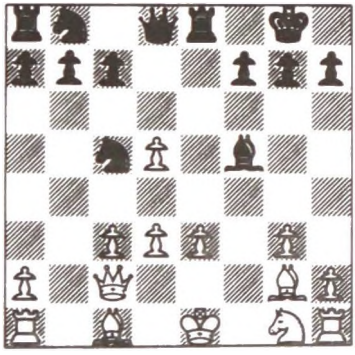


Diagram 21
Dr E. N. Bramley–Povah
Inter-county Championship 1977

Notice the activity of Black's pieces compared with White's, which are reduced to defensive duties. White now loses his extra pawn and the black queen enters the game with deadly effect. 12 Bf1 is met by 12 . . . Qxd5∓.

12 e4 Qxd5!
13 Kf1 Qxd3+
14 Qxd3 Nxd3
15 Ba3

At last White tries to develop his pieces, but it is too late; Black's extra pawn and better position make the win simple. The bishop on f5 is immune since 15 ex^{f}5?? Re1 is mate.

15 . . . Be6
16 Ke2 Bc4
17 Ke3 Nd7
18 Rd1 N7e5
19 Nh3?! Rad8

Black's last piece moves in, ready for the kill!

20 Bf1? Ng4+
0–1

White must lose further material after 21 Kf3 Nde5+ and 22 . . . Rxd1.

CENTRAL CONTROL

The advantages of central control are easily illustrated when one considers the efficiency and mobility of the pieces in different positions. Consider, for example, the following table which demonstrates the number of squares controlled by a knight occupying certain squares:

Square occupied by knight	Number of squares controlled
a1	2
a2	3
a3	4
b3	6
c3	8

It is not difficult to appreciate that the knight grows in stature as it approaches a more centralized square; in fact the knight on c3 may be said to be four times as powerful as a knight on a1. Of course this generalization assumes that control of all squares is of equal value, so when we consider that the knight on c3 controls important central squares such as d5 and e4 as well as b5, a4, a2, b1, d1 and e2, we soon realize that this knight is probably more than four times as effective as a knight on a1. From this simple illustration we can conclude that it is important to deploy one's pieces efficiently when developing, in order to maximize their mobility and effectiveness. Control of the

centre offers increased mobility, since one's pieces can move readily to either flank as the need arises. Furthermore, central control can have the effect of splitting the opponent's forces as the next example illustrates.

Game 3

	White	Black	Vienna Opening
1	e4	e5	
2	Nc3	Nf6	
3	f4	exf4?	

Although this capture is playable in the King's gambit (1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4, etc.) it loses precious time here because the knight on f6 is forced to move again. 3 . . . d5 was better.

4 e5

White takes the opportunity to chase the black knight back to base and to establish a dominant pawn centre.

4 . . . Ng8
5 Nf3

White continues developing and prevents the powerful 5 . . . Qh4.

5 . . . b6

Black intends to fianchetto his light-squared bishop, but he is neglecting the centre. 5 . . . d5 was more logical.

6 d4 Bb7
7 Bxf4

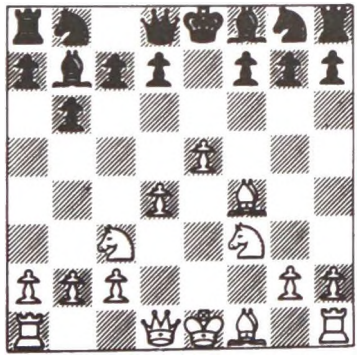


Diagram 22

White has regained his pawn and controls the centre.

7 . . . Bb4
8 Bd3

With the likelihood that Black will castle short, White prepares an assault on the vulnerable h7 square, since the pawn on e5 denies the black knight the defensive square f6.

8 . . . Ne7
9 O–O Bxc3

If Black castles immediately then his dark-squared bishop runs into trouble, e.g. 9 . . . O–O 10 Ne4! threatening 11 c3 and b4 as well as a king-side attack with Nfg5, Qh5, Nf6, etc.

10 bxc3 O–O

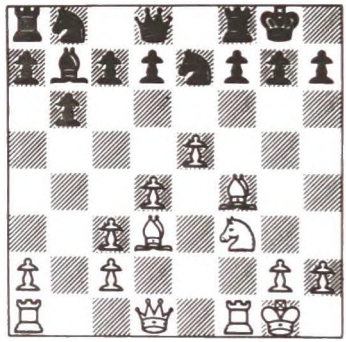


Diagram 23

White does not mind his doubled pawns because his centre now enjoys further support. Notice how the central wedge of white pawns tends to split Black's forces into two separate units with the black king isolated on the king's side. It should not come as a surprise to find that White has a decisive sacrificial breakthrough!

11 Bxh7+!

This sacrifice is well known in such positions and is referred to as the 'Greek Gift'; the basic features are:

1. Black's castled king behind three unmoved pawns without a knight on f6.
2. White has a bishop on the b1–h7 diagonal, a knight able to get to g5, and a queen able to get to h5.

3. An open or half-open file for a rook (usually the e- or f-file) is an added advantage.

11 . . . Kxh7

The alternative 11 . . . Kh8 just leaves Black a pawn down with a bad position.

12 Ng5+ Kg6

Not: (a) 12 . . . Kh8? 13 Qh5+ Kg8 14 Qh7 mate.
(b) 12 . . . Kh6? 13 Nxf7+ +−.
(c) 12 . . . Kg8 13 Qh5 Re8 (the only move) 14 Qxf7+ Kh8 15 Qh5+ Kg8 16 Qh7+ Kf8 17 Qh8+ Ng8 18 Be3+ Ke7 19 Qxg7 mate.

13 Qg4

Threatening 14 Ne6+ winning.

13 . . . f5
14 exf6 e.p.

Then Black could resign since he must lose his queen or be mated. The reader is advised to verify this for himself.

KING SAFETY

Early castling is invariably advisable in the opening in order to secure a safe haven for your king. It is true that Réti has said, 'you should castle when there is no better move'; but many players tend to castle sooner than this remark suggests. More often than not they were justified for, if you delay castling in order to launch a premature advance or attack, then you may suffer a similar fate as that in the next example.

Game 4

White: G. D. Lee — London North Circular League.
Black: A. J. Wheatley — 1975

1 e4 c5
2 Nc3

The Closed Sicilian; White does not intend to open the centre with d4 as in the open variations of the Sicilian.

2 . . . Nc6

After this move it would be difficult for White to play d4 in any case.

3 f4 g6
4 Nf3 Bg7
5 g3

Also possible was 5 Bc4 or 5 Bb5.

5 . . . d6
6 Bg2 Rb8?!

A reasonable move but badly timed; Black should concentrate on castling, e.g. 6 . . . e6 7 . . . Nge7 8 . . . O–O, and then he can attempt queen-side expansion with . . . Rb8 and . . . b5, etc.

7 O–O b5

Again Black should get on with his king-side development.

8 a3 a5?

A very bad move, Black is intent upon playing . . . b4 and could be accused of criminal negligence of his king side.

9 a4 b4
10 Nb5 Ba6

White is quite happy to sacrifice a pawn, especially as he will gain tremendous control of the white squares on the queen side.

11 c4! bxc3 e.p.
12 dxc3 Bxb5
13 axb5 Rxb5

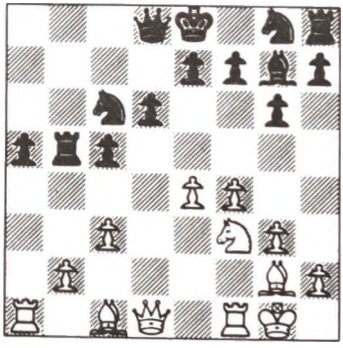


Diagram 24
G. D. Lee–A. J. Wheatley
London 1975

Black has won a pawn, but his retarded development and weak white squares offer White more than enough compensation.

14 e5!

Logically opening up the long white diagonal.

14 . . . dxe5
15 Qa4 Qb6

(not 15 . . . Rb6 16 Nxe5+− or 15 . . . Na7 16 c4 +−)

16 Nxe5 Nxe5
17 fxe5 c4+

Black prevents 18 c4 and does so with a gain of tempo.

18 Kh1 e6?

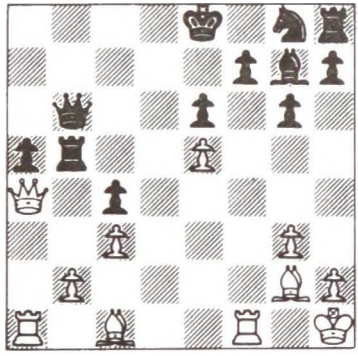


Diagram 25
Lee–Wheatley

Black's last hope to get his king out of the centre was 18 . . . Nh6! (not 18 . . . Bxe5? 19 Qxc4! threatening both Qxf7+ and Bc6+) 19 Be3! Qa6 20 Qxc4 (20 Bxh6 Bxh6 21 Qxc4 O–O and now 22 Rxf7? fails to 22 . . . Rxf7 23 Bd5 e6! 24 Bxe6 Qb7 −+) 20 . . . O–O 21 Bc6 Rb6 22 Qxa6 Rxa6 23 Bb7 Re6 24 Rxa5 Ng4 25 Bd4 Bxe5 with an advantage to White, but at least Black is still in the game!

19 Be3! Qa6

(Obviously not 19 . . . Qxe3 20 Qxb5+ +−).

20 b3!

This clever move forces the black king to stay in the centre, e.g. 20 . . . cxb3 loses to 21 c4.

20 . . . Kf8
21 Qxc4

Having lost the pin on the a4–e8 diagonal, White now establishes another pin.

21 . . . Ne7
22 Rad1 Bxe5
23 Rd7 Nf5
24 Rxf5!

White feels justified in sacrificing the exchange because of Black's vulnerable king and poor piece co-ordination. If 24 . . . gxf5 25 Ra7 forces the queen to desert the pinned rook, e.g. 25 . . . Qd6 26 Qxb5 +−:

24 . . . exf5?
25 Qxf7 mate.

In this example Black was guilty of neglecting his king-side development, and he was duly punished for leaving his king in the centre.

Finally, an example from the London Under–14 Championship, 1974, in which Black was guilty of leaving his king in the centre, but this time for no apparent reason—an even greater sin!

Game 5

White: Taiman
Black: Wooley

London U14 Championships
1974

1 e4 c5
2 Nf3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 Nxd4 Nf6
5 Nc3

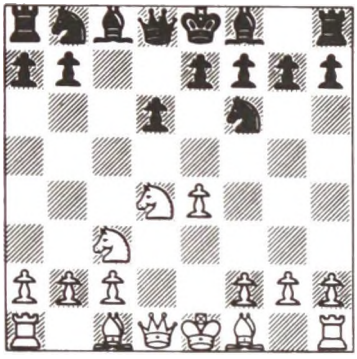


Diagram 26
Taiman–Wooley
London Under-14
Championship
1974

This is a very common position in the Sicilian Defence from which Black can opt for several different variations: 5 . . . g6 the Dragon variation, 5 . . . e6 the Scheveningen variation, 5 . . . a6 the Najdorf variation, and 5 . . . Nc6 the Four Knights variation. The move played in the game is a poor alternative since it weakens the d5 square and creates a weak backward pawn on d6, which will require protection from Black's pieces.

5 . . . e5?!
6 Nf3 Be6
7 Bg5 Nbd7
8 Be2 Be7
9 Qd2 a6
10 O–O

Both players have developed reasonably well so far, and if Black were to continue with 10 . . . O–O then his disadvantage due to weaknesses on the d-file would be minimal. However, he now undertakes a dangerous pawn snatch on the queen side.

10 . . . Qb6?!
11 Rfd1

White baits the trap!

11 . . . Qxb2?!

Castles short was more prudent.

12 Rab1 Qa3
13 Rxb7

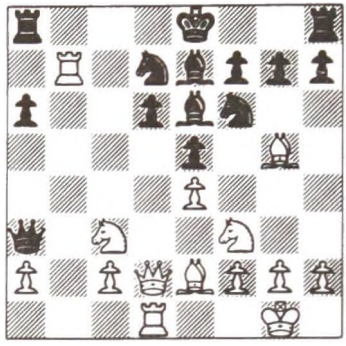


Diagram 27
Taiman–Wooley

White has regained his pawn and now has his rook menacingly placed on the seventh rank.

13 . . . Nc5?

Black suicidally neglects his king's safety. 13 . . . O–O would have minimized White's advantage.

14 Rxe7+ ! Kf8

If 14 . . . Kxe7 15 Qxd6+ Ke8 16 Qc6+ Ke7 17 Nd5+ Bxd5 18 Rxd5 Rhc8 19 Qd6+ Ke8 20 Rxe5+ Ne6 21 Qxa3 +−.

15 Qxd6 Ne8?
16 Rxe8+!
(a nice finish)
16 . . . Kxe8
17 Qe7 mate.

Black could have spared himself this disaster if he had castled at move 10, 11 or 13. The moral to this game is simple—DO NOT NEGLECT THE SAFETY OF YOUR KING.

OPENING CLASSIFICATION

Having examined the opening principles, we will now consider the different types of opening positions to which they apply. Chess openings are frequently classified as follows:

1. open games
2. semi-open games
3. closed games.

This classification is based almost entirely upon the type of pawn structure that is evident. Open games usually arise from symmetrical king pawn openings where early pawn captures provide open lines for the pieces; the Danish gambit is a classic example—1 e4 e5 2 d4 exd4 3 c3 dxc3 4 Bc4 cxb2 5 Bxb2 with an extremely open position. Further examples of open games are the King's gambit (1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4, etc.); the Giuoco Piano (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 c3 Nf6 5 d4 exd 4 6 cxd4, etc.); the Scotch gambit (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 exd4 4 c3 dxc3 5 Nxc3, etc.), and the Open Ruy Lopez (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 O–O Nxe4 6 d4, etc.).

On the other hand, semi-open games generally arise from asymmetrical pawn structures with only a few (one or two) pawn exchanges. Examples of semi-open games are the Sicilian Defence (1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3, etc.), the Caro-Kann (1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5, etc.); the Gruenfeld (1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 d5 4 cxd5 Nxd5 5 e4 Nxc3 6 bxc3 Bg7, etc.) and the Modern Benoni (1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e6 4 Nc3 exd5 5 cxd5 d6 6 e4 g6, etc.).

Finally, the closed games rarely have any early pawn captures at all, consequently strategical manoeuvring is the order of the day. Examples include the Réti (1 Nf3 Nf6 2 g3 g6 3 Bg2 Bg7 4 O–O O–O, etc.); The English (1 c4); the Closed Ruy Lopez (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 O–O Be7 6 Re1 b5 7 Bb3 d6 8 c3 O–O, etc.); the Czech Benoni (1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e5 4 Nc3 d6 5 e4 Be7, etc.) and certain variations of the Pirc and French defences, etc.

It should be noted that this classification is only a rough guide based on the author's impression of various openings; it cannot be denied that some variations of these openings, such as the Pirc, can give rise to reasonably open positions. We can now compare the different opening principles according to the type of opening in consideration, as illustrated in the following table:

	OPENING CLASSIFICATION		
Opening Principle	Open	Semi-Open	Closed
Development	Speedy development is very important.	Speedy development is still important.	Speed is less important—manoeuvring to occupy key squares is more essential.
Central Control	Less important due to flexibility of position and lack of centre pawns.	More essential due to danger of expanding pawn centres.	Still important because this might result in a spatial advantage for one side. But static pawns imply little danger from expanding pawn centre.
King Safety	Early castling is normally very important.	Still important but castling can often be delayed for a few more moves.	Less important because of blocked pawn centre and early play on the flanks.

It is hoped that this table will provide the reader with a rough guide to the different types of openings and their relationship with the basic opening principles.

Now we turn our attention to the problems of selecting, learning and understanding an opening.

DEVELOPING AN OPENING REPERTOIRE

How should a player decide which openings to play? This problem can be handled in three methodical stages:

1. The student should study his own games in order to determine the type of position that he favours: does he prefer open tactical or closed strategical positions. It is simply a matter of being objectively self-critical in order to identify one's style of play.
2. Next the student should examine the spectrum of chess openings and select those which suit his mode of play. He should prepare lines for each opening he expects to meet; for instance, as Black he must have defences against 1 e4, 1 d4, 1 c4 and 1 Nf3, and he also needs defences against various obscure openings, such as 1 b3, 1 g3, 1 b4 and 1 f4 which are occasionally encountered.
3. The third stage in selecting an opening repertoire is based on the individual's attitude. Some players prefer to play highly fashionable openings which require a great deal of learning and continual updating, otherwise they run the risk of being surprised by the latest theoretical wrinkles. Other players might prefer to play a less popular opening which, with some home study, can prove to be a very effective surprise weapon.

The author, being a basically lazy character, decided to adopt the latter approach. In 1970 he was well known among his peers as an advocate of the Sicilian Dragon. So, in preparation for the British Junior Championship, he sought a new reply to 1 e4. He had decided to stick with the Sicilian Defence, but which of the many variations should he play? He could not face the mass of complicated variations that arose from the fashionable Najdorf variation, neither could he understand the ramifications of the more subtle Taimanov and Scheveningen variations. Having browsed through his small library, he stumbled across a rather obscure variation known as the Labourdonnais–Löwenthal (1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 e5), which had the merit of being relatively unanalysed with very few recent Master games. The Löwenthal offered two advantages: first, home analysis was necessary to understand the opening, which meant that most opponents would be unprepared; second, the lack of recent Master games meant that the variation would come as an unpleasant surprise to many adversaries.

As a consequence, the author enjoyed a great deal of success with this variation and by documenting his results (name of opponent, opponent's grade and variation played), he was able to determine which sub-variations needed more analysis, etc. In four and a half years with the Lōwenthal he had the following record:

played — 45
won — 23
drew — 15
lost — 7

against opponents in the following grade ranges:

Grade	Frequency	Won	Drew	Lost
200+ (2200+)	11	2	6	3
190–199 (2120–2200)	8	3	3	2
180–189 (2040–2120)	12	5	6	1
170–179 (1960–2040)	7	6	—	1
below 169 (–2040)	—			
	45			

This data suggests that the Lōwenthal was a very effective weapon in the 'black armoury' of the author, particularly when you consider that his own grade was in the 180s for the first three years of this period. Why did the Lōwenthal serve him so well? The answer is simply that the methodical study of the opening gave him a fuller appreciation and understanding of the opening than most of his opponents.

It is worth detailing the method of study adopted so that the reader may apply some of the techniques to the formulation of his own opening repertoire:

1. It is necessary to research through as much chess literature as possible, e.g. relevant books and magazines. The thrice-yearly publication *Chess Informant* is particularly useful. Make use of your local library! Of course, if you have access to a computer with a chess database, the task of researching an opening can be made considerably easier. Disks containing a thousand games on most openings are now available.
2. A loose-leaf or card-index system should be established, listing critical games, positions and personal analyses. Both systems have the advantage of being flexible and allowing for regular updating,

restructuring, etc. Once again, a computer can assist you here, not only for storing material on a database, but also in helping you with your analysis.

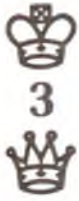
3. It is very important to familiarize yourself with an opening before actually playing it, and there are several ways of doing this:

(a) discuss the ideas and any critical games or positions with chess friends and club colleagues; save yourself a lot of misery, and make sure you are aware of any traps and pitfalls that await discovery!

(b) Practise the opening in a series of 'blitz games' with a suitably prepared colleague. The author, for instance, used to play countless five-minute games with a friend in the Sicilian Dragon; after about 17 moves of established theory, each player still had approximately four minutes in which to investigate a theoretically critical position. The procedure can be repeated with colours reversed.

These training techniques enable a player to go to the board confidently armed with the knowledge that he has a reasonable feel for some of the positions that result from the opening under study.

Nevertheless, it must be admitted that this rather mechanical approach may not appeal to everyone, but there are many players who should derive some benefit from the methods expounded here.



3 Basic Middle Game Features

So far we have covered the opening and ending phases of the game, now comes the difficult task of bridging the gap.

The middle game is undoubtedly the most complex phase of the game, and it is the stage when the players can allow their true ability and style of play to come to the fore.

Unfortunately there is a tendency for players to neglect the middle game, with most study time being devoted to either the ending or more commonly the opening. The complexity of the middle game, with its wealth of different strategies, is well worth study, however, since various basic principles can be learnt and applied with little effort and the dividends are often large!

In this chapter and the next we shall consider some of the basic themes of the middle game, and students should study them with a view to establishing which type of middle game is best suited to their style of play. For instance Korchnoi is renowned for his liking of positions with an isolated queen's pawn (IQP), because such a position allows active play for his pieces. On the other hand some players fanatically believe in the power of 'the two bishops' while others enjoy playing 'minority attacks'.

We shall now attempt to give a brief breakdown and explanation of some of the basic middle game themes, but it should be emphasized that the keen enthusiast ought to refer to one of the many classic middle game texts for a more thorough coverage.

Open Files and the Seventh and Eighth Ranks

Placing rooks on open files (files with no pawns) is one of the most important principles in the middle game, because control of an open file will often lead to penetration into the enemy position—namely the seventh and eighth ranks. However it should be noted that control of an open file does not guarantee a win; normally other

advantages are required to add to the opponent's downfall. Consider, for instance, the following strategical gem from Steinitz:

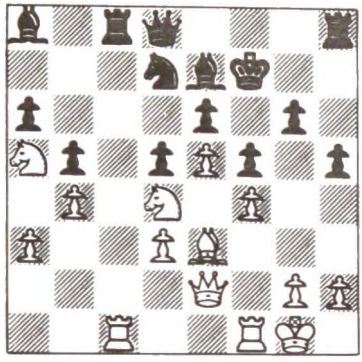


Diagram 28
Steinitz–Sellman
Baltimore
1885

Steinitz holds all the trump cards, in that he has the knights (to be favoured in closed positions); Black has very weak dark squares and a dreadful white-squared bishop. Steinitz now hammers the last nail into Black's coffin by taking absolute control of the open c-file. Play continued—24 Rxc8 Qxc8 25 Rc1 Qb8 26 Qc2! Bd8 (Black attempts to prevent penetration to the seventh) 27 Nac6 (Steinitz wants to eliminate Black's 'good' bishop on d8 when the dark squares will be there for the taking; in so doing, he allows Black the chance to get rid of his 'bad' bishop on a8, but White's infiltration on the c-file would prove decisive, e.g. 27 . . . Bxc6 28 Qxc6 Nf8 29 Nxe6! Nxe6 30 Qd7+ Be7 31 Rc6! Nf8 32 Rf6+ and Black is finished) 27 . . . Qb7 28 Nxd8+ Rxd8 29 Qc7! Qb8 (Black avoids the exchange of queens which would bring a rook to the seventh) 30 Bf2 Qb6 (to prevent 31 Bh4) 31 Nf3 Qxc7 32 Rxc7: the end is very near now since Black hardly has a plausible move. 32 . . . Ke8 (to free the black rook and to break the pin along the seventh) 33 Ng5 Nf8 34 Bc5 Nd7 (to prevent 35 Re7 mate) 35 Bd6! resigns. Black is in zugzwang since all legal moves result in drastic material losses. Steinitz managed to force victory in this game due to several advantages, one of which was his domination of the open c-file which eventually resulted in the penetration of one of his rooks to the seventh rank. A rook on the seventh or eighth rank will invariably cause havoc because of its ability to attack and harass the enemy pawns.

Another example of the importance of controlling an open file is seen in the following example:

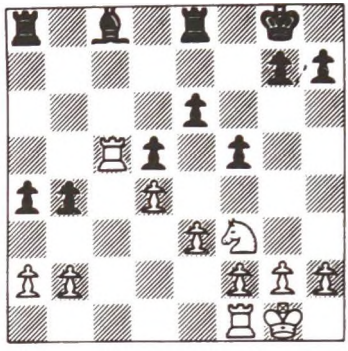


Diagram 29
Alekhine–Yates
London
1928

Alekhine to move, has several advantages in his favour (1) control of the open file, (2) a well-placed knight which can attack on the dark squares against a hapless bishop and (3) Black has vulnerable queenside pawns on a4 and b4. Now watch Alekhine translate these advantages into a full point! 20 Rfc1 Ba6 21 Ne5! (Black was hoping to solve some of his problems by exchanging the rooks on the c-file with 21 . . . Rac8, but this now loses a pawn to 22 Rxc8 Rxc8 23 Rxc8+ Bxc8 24 Nc6! when White threatens both 25 Nxb4 and 25 Ne7+ winning the bishop, and Black has no effective way of meeting both threats) 21 . . . Reb8 22 f3! (White cannot improve the position of his rooks or knight at the moment, so he prepares to activate his last piece—his king!) 22 . . . b3 23 a3 (since White controls the only open file it is logical to keep all other files closed—that is 23 ab ab would give Black chances of counterplay down the a-file) 23 . . . h6 (23 . . . Rc8 is still unplayable because of 24 Rxc8+ Rxc8 25 Rxc8+ Bxc8 26 Kf2 Kf8 27 Ke1 Ke7 28 Kd2 Kd6 29 Kc3 Kc7 30 Kb4 Bd7 31 Nxd7 Kxd7 32 Kxa4 winning) 24 Kf2 Kh7 25 h4 Rf8 26 Kg3 Rfb8 (Black can do nothing but wait!) 27 Rc7—at last White's rooks make their inevitable penetration to the seventh rank—27 . . . Bb5 28 R1c5! (attacking the bishop to tie down the black rooks) 28 . . . Ba6 29 R5c6 Re8 30 Kf4 Kg8 31 h5 (White is in no hurry to double rooks on the seventh since Black is helplessly tied up at the moment) 31 . . . Bf1 32 g3 Ba6 33 Rf7 Kh7 34 Rcc7 Rg8 35 Nd7! (White's threats along the seventh rank now bring the game to a rapid conclusion—White threatens 36 Nf6+ winning the exchange) 35 . . . Kh8 36 Nf6! Rgf8—obviously not 36 . . . gxf6?? 37 Rh7 mate—37 Rxg7!! Rxf6 (forced since White threatened 38 Rh7 mate. Alekhine now finds the killer move!) 38 Ke5! resigns. Black cannot save his rook because if

either rook goes to f8 there follows 39 Rh7+ Kg8 40 Rcg7 mate.

It should be noted that an open file is sometimes of little significance if both players are capable of contesting the file, and no other advantages are evident. The diagrammed position illustrates the point well:

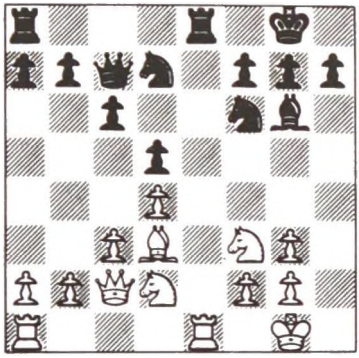


Diagram 30
Capablanca–Maroczy
Lake Hopatcong
1926

The position arose from an exchange variation of the French Defence, and this virtually symmetrical pattern petered out to dead-pan equality as follows—15 Rxe8+ Rxe8 16 Bxg6 hxg6 17 Re1 when the exchange of the last pair of rooks renders the open file useless. The game continued 17 . . . Rxe1+ 18 Nxe1 Ne8 19 Nd3 Nd6 20 Qb3 a6 21 Kf1 ½–½.

The maxim 'Rooks should be placed on open files' also applies to semi-(half) open files. These are files with only one pawn on them and in many cases the pawn in question becomes an object of attack for the enemy rooks. Consider the following example:

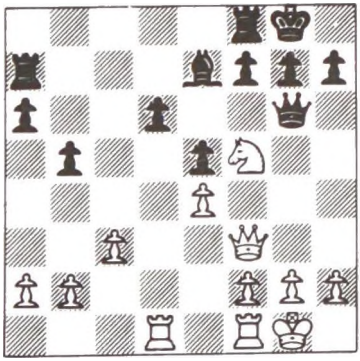


Diagram 31
Povah–Nielsen
Jersey
1977

White enjoys pressure on the half-open d-file against Black's weak backward pawn. By intensifying this pressure White is able to tie Black up and then switch his attention to Black's vulnerable queenside pawns—23 Rd5 Rd8 24 Rfd1 Qe6 (White threatened 25 Rxe5! dxe5? 26 Nxe7+ Rxe7 27 Rxd8 mating) 25 Qd3 Rad7 (an amusing position with all eight pieces concentrating on the d6 square, but now White can strike on the queen side) 26 a4! g6 (26 . . . bxa4 27 Qxa6 wins a pawn, since the black pawn on a4 must fall; attempts at defending the b-pawn such as 26 . . . Rb8 leave the d-pawn inadequately defended) 27 Nxe7+ Qxe7 28 axb5 axb5 29 Rxb5 with a clear advantage. White's advantage in this position was due to his permanent pressure on the half-open d-file and the fact that Black had a vulnerable backward pawn which required support from his pieces.

However, there are some half-open files which prove to be of little use to either player, consider Diagram 32:

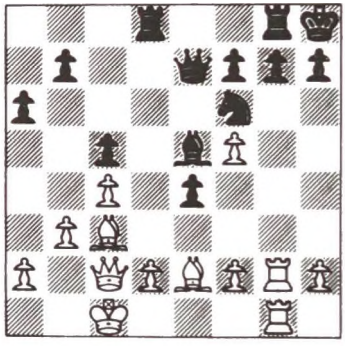


Diagram 32
Tartakover–Sultan Khan
12th Match Game
1931

White controls the half-open g-file, although it is of little practical value since he cannot increase the pressure against g7, nor can he open the g-file. On the other hand, the semi-open d-file offers Black good attacking prospects since he can increase pressure against d2 with the doubling of his major pieces on the d-file and a timely . . . Bf4. Furthermore Black controls useful squares on the file such as d3 and d4, and he can also open up the adjacent c-file with . . . b5. The game continued 1 . . . Bd4 2 Bd1 Qe5 3 Ba5 Rde8 4 Bc3 b5 5 cxb5 axb5 6 f3 e3! 7 Bxd4 cxd4 8 Kb1 Nd5 when Black had a clear advantage.

Knight Outposts and the 'Good' Knight versus the 'Bad' Bishop

Although when first starting to play chess we are told that a knight

and a bishop are both worth approximately three pawns each, we soon learn that there are certain positions when we can favour one piece or the other. As a general rule we can say that the bishop prefers open positions with few pawns on the board, while the knight tends to prefer closed positions with many pawns on the board.

Knights are particularly useful in crowded middle game positions if they can reach squares which are unassailable from enemy pawns—such squares we refer to as 'outposts'. The diagrammed position shows White with two well-placed knights in the centre of the board. The knight on e5 can only be removed by one of the black minor pieces, while the knight on f4 can be driven away by . . . g5; but this would leave Black's king-side permanently weakened:

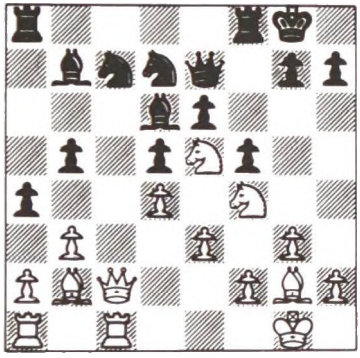


Diagram 33
Korchnoi–Bellin
Hastings
1975/6

As we know from the previous section White enjoys yet another advantage in this position—his control of the only open file. In addition to these advantages, Black's pieces are rather cramped and poorly co-ordinated, consequently it should come as no surprise to find that White has a powerful combination—Korchnoi played 19 Qxc7! Bxc7 20 Rxc7 Rfd8 (perhaps Black should try 20 . . . Bc8 when White would have the interesting 21 Nxd5! exd5 22 Bxd5+ Kh8 22 Bxa8 leaving White with rook, bishop and two pawns, and an active position for the queen; alternatively 21 . . . Qd6 22 Rc6 Qb8 23 Rxc8! 24 Nxd7 winning masses of material. However, 21 . . . Qd8! appears relatively best for Black, e.g. 22 Nxd7 Bxd7 23 Rxd7 Qxd7 24 Nb6 Qa7 25 Nxa8 Rxa8 26 Bxa8 Qxa8 when Black should not be losing) 21 Rxb7 Rac8 22 Nfd3 (White reinforces his knight on e5, and threatens to bring the other knight in on c5—another strong outpost) 22 . . . a3

23 Bc1 Qd6? 24 Nxd7 Rxd7 25 Bxa3! Qxa3 26 Rxd7 Rc2 27 Bf1 g5 28 Rb7 h5 29 Rxb5 h4 30 Rc5 Rd2 31 Rac1 hxg3 32 hxg3 Kg7 33 Rc7+ Kh6 34 R1c6 1–0.

Yet another example of a knight occupying a strong outpost was seen in the following example:

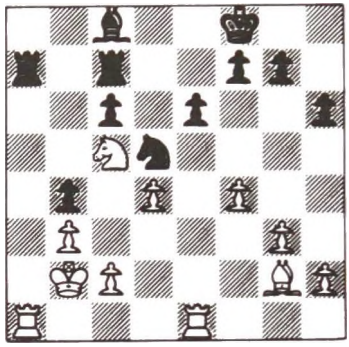


Diagram 34
Gaprindashvili-Grinfeld
Tbilisi
1976

The women's ex-world champion has a very powerful knight posted on c5, and she now embarks upon a manoeuvre to win absolute control of the a-file—31 Rxa7 Rxa7 32 Nd3 Rb7 (forced in view of the threat of 33 Bxd5 and 34 Nxb4) 33 Ra1 Bd7 34 Nc5—the knight now returns to its strong outpost—34 . . . Rc7 35 Ra8+ Ke7 36 Bxd5! (White eliminates the well-placed knight in order to render the b-pawn defenceless) 36 . . . exd5 37 Rb8 Bg4 38 Na6 Ra7 39 Nxb4 Kd6 40 Re8 (controlling the important open e-file) 40 . . . c5 41 dxc5+ Kxc5 42 Nd3+ Kd4 1–0 Black loses further material after 43 Ne5 Bd7 44 Re7 +–. This example demonstrated the superiority of a 'good' knight over a 'bad' bishop—the knight could occupy several key squares such as c5, d3 and e5 without fear of being disturbed, while the bishop was hemmed in by his own pawns for most of the game, and even when he did escape he never actually achieved anything.

There are many examples throughout chess literature of the 'good' knight versus the 'bad' bishop, but it is not within the scope of this book to give more than a few examples. The keen student would be very well advised to study Master games which can be found in countless chess books in order to identify the skilful way in which the Master conducts an attack or utilizes some positional advantage, such as the 'good knight versus bad bishop' situation.

The 'Two Bishops' and the 'Good' Bishop versus the 'Bad' Knight
In the last section we considered the superiority of a knight over a bishop in a closed position, but as positions open up (i.e. more pawns are exchanged) the power of the bishops tends to increase—hence the reason why a bishop is frequently preferred to a knight in an ending with pawns on both sides of the board. The bishop being a long-range piece is capable of monitoring both sides of the board from one square, while a knight cannot effectively support play on both wings at the same time. Two bishops working together can offer a potent advantage especially in the middle game, assuming of course that the bishops can locate useful diagonals.

Our first example is the classic game Rosenthal–Steinitz, Vienna 1873, which is thought to be one of the earliest examples illustrating the power of the two bishops:

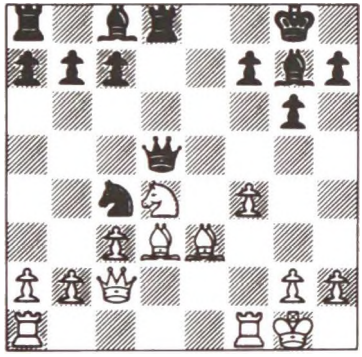


Diagram 35
Rosenthal–Steinitz
Vienna
1873

Steinitz has just played 14 . . . Nc4 and Rosenthal played 15 Bxc4 Qxc4 ceding the bishop pair. Black's advantage is not decisive as yet since the position is only semi-open and the white minor pieces have support points (outposts) at d4 and e5. Steinitz now embarks upon a series of pawn moves to gain control of these squares and so enhance the scope of his own bishops. However, it should be noted that accurate judgement is needed to ensure that the pawn moves, which are frequently weakening, are adequately compensated for by the increased scope of the bishops and the restricted activity of the enemy pieces. Play continued 16 Qf2 c5! 17 Nf3 b6 (Black has driven the white knight back and now he prepares to activate his powerful white-squared bishop) 18 Ne5 Qe6 19 Qf3 Ba6 20 Rfe1 f6 another key

outpost is rendered uninhabitable! 21 Ng4 h5—and yet again the knight is pushed back. Such a move might well be criticized as weakening, but it is justified because of the resulting immobility of the white pieces. 22 Nf2 Qf7 (preparing to seize the long white diagonal with . . . Bb7) 23 f5 g5 24 Rad1 Bb7 25 Qg3 Rd5! Black ignores the a-pawn but goes for the vulnerable f-pawn 26 Rxd5 Qxd5 27 Rd1 (27 Qh3 fails to 27 . . . g4 when the f-pawn falls) 27 . . . Qxf5 28 Qc7 Bd5 29 b3 Rc8 30 c4 Bf7 31 Bc1 Re2!—Black occupies the seventh rank with deadly threats—32 Rf1 Qc2 (threatening 33 . . . Rxf2 34 Rxf2 Qxc1+ when the two bishops will overwhelm the rook) 33 Qg3 Qxa2 0–1.

Another example demonstrating the superiority of the two bishops is seen in Diagram 36:

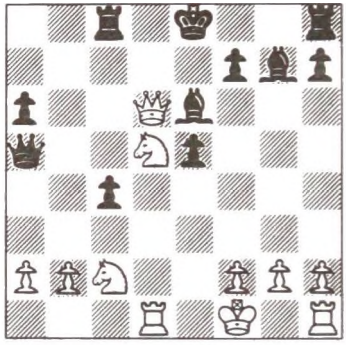


Diagram 36
Tscheshkovsky–Sveshnikov USSR 1978

White threatens mate but Sveshnikov was able to parry this threat and offer the exchange of queens since the two bishops would give Black the better ending. The game continued 23 . . . Qc5 24 Qxa6?! (White snatches a pawn since 24 . . . Bxd5 is answered by 25 Rxd5 Qxd5 26 Qxc8+ with the advantage. Black, however, takes the opportunity to castle.) 24 . . . O–O 25 Nce3 Rfd8 26 Qb7 Rb8 27 Qc7 Qxc7 28 Nxc7 Rxd1+ 29 Nxd1 c3! ∓ (Black opens up the position for both his rook and white-squared bishop. 30 Nxe6 c2 is decisive as Black queens; while 30 bc Bc4+ 31 Ke1 Rc8 wins the white knight which is trapped by the white-squared bishop) 30 Nxc3 Bc4+ 31 Kg1 Rxb2 (Black's rook has penetrated to the seventh rank and his two bishops, plus White's poorly co-ordinated pieces, ensure a clear advantage) 32 g3 Rc2 33 N3d5 Bd3 34 Ne8 Rc1+ (not 34 . . . Be4?

35 Nef6+ + −) 35 Kg2 Be4+ 36 f3 Rc2+ 37 Kh3 Bxd5 0–1 Black's extra piece is decisive.

The power of the two bishops is further illustrated in the next example where Black loses material, but finds that his bishops on adjacent diagonals (often referred to as 'Horwitz Bishops'), coupled with a powerful advanced passed pawn, provide adequate counterplay.

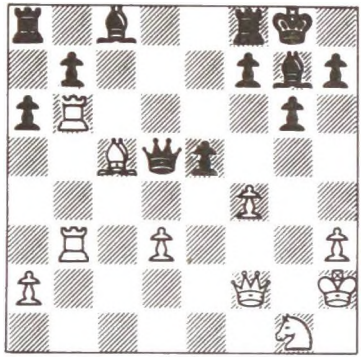


Diagram 37
D. J. Sewell–Povah
Surrey Under-16
Championship
1968

White has just played 25 Bc5 attacking the black rook, and Black answers with 25 . . . Re8? (25 . . . Rd8 would avoid the loss of the black queen) 26 Rd6! (the black queen is amazingly trapped in the middle of the board!) 26 . . . Be6! (the white-squared bishop takes his opportunity to come into the game on the useful long diagonal from h1–a8) 27 Rxd5 Bxd5 28 Ra3?! The rook is poorly placed on this square—it was better to keep the rook on the b-file. 28 . . . exf4 29 Ne2? (It is understandable that White should want to activate his knight, but he should neutralize the power of Black's two bishops with 29 Bd4 first, and then play Nf3 blockading the f-pawn. The immediate 29 Nf3 would be met by 29 . . . Rac8 when Black would still have dangerous threats for his material deficit) 29 . . . f3 30 Ng1? (30 Ng3 was better but Black still has dangerous counterplay, e.g. 30 . . . Be5 31 Kg1 Rac8 32 d4 Bf4—intending 33 . . . b6 34 Bxb6 Rc1 + 35 Kh2 Re2 − +—therefore 33 Rc3 b6 34 Bb4 Rxc3 35 Bxc3 Be3 − +; alternatively, 31 Bd4 Bf4 32 Kg1—to stop 32 . . . Re2 − +—32 . . . Rac8 33 Rc3? Rxc3 34 Bxc3 Be3 − + Notice how Black's bishops and rooks co-operate superbly) 30 . . . Be5+ 31 Kh1 Bg3!!

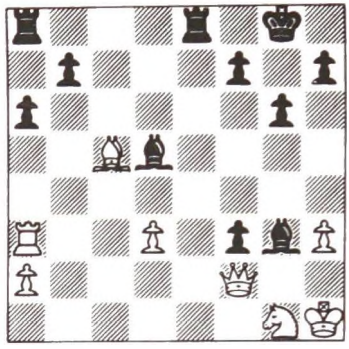


Diagram 38
Sewell–Povah

This bishop sacrifice decides the game in Black's favour. 32 Qd4! (If 32 Qxg3 f2+ 33 Nf3 f1=Q+ followed by 34 . . . Qxf3 leaves Black a rook up, while 33 Kh2? f1=N!! mate!) 32 . . . f2+ 33 Qxd5 f1=Q with an easy win for Black who has rook and two pawns for a knight.

We now conclude this section with a complete game from one of the strategical masters, ex-world champion Vassily Smyslov. The whole game is given, because the study of Master games is one of the best methods of improving your game. Most of the contemporary Masters and Grandmasters of today have studied the games and playing styles of the former greats. The keen student should cover up the page and try to guess Smyslov's moves—in this fashion the game will be more instructive.

I. Bondarevsky–V. Smyslov, Moscow, 1946
1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 O–O Be7 6 Bxc6. This delayed-exchange variation of the Ruy Lopez gives Black the two bishops as compensation for his doubled pawns. 6 . . . dxc6 7Re1 Nd7 8 d4 exd4 9 Qxd4 O–O 10 Bf4.

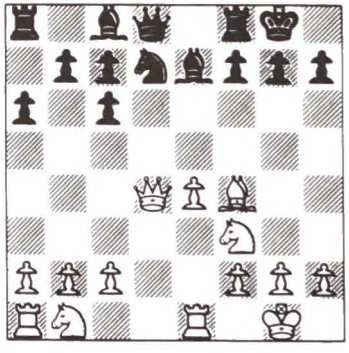


Diagram 39
Bondarevsky–Smyslov
Moscow
1946

Now cover up the page and try to guess Black's moves and see if you can play as well as Smyslov!

10 . . . Nc5

Black does not mind the exchange of queens since his two bishops will be very powerful in the ending.

11 Qxd8
11 . . . Bxd8

Naturally not 11 . . . Rxd8 which loses a pawn to 12 Bxc7.

12 Nc3
12 . . . f5!

Smyslov is trying to open up the position for his pieces, 13 exf5 Bxf5 would activate both his white-squared bishop and the rook on f8.

13 e5

This reduces the scope of White's pieces, Smyslov suggested 13 Bg5 Bxg5 14 Nxg5 h6 15 b4 Nxe4 16 Ngxe4 fxe4 17 Nxe4 Bf5 with approximate equality.

13 . . . Ne6!

As Nimzovich says 'the passed pawn is a criminal who should be kept under lock and key'. Knights are very good at blockading because they still exert control over their normal range of squares.

14 Bd2
14 . . . g5!

This pawn advance threatening to win the white knight by . . . g4 is characteristic of Steinitz's policy—to use the pawns to harass the enemy pieces and to enhance the scope of the two bishops.

15 Ne2

Intending to meet 15 . . . g4 with 16 Nfd4 dislodging Black's powerful knight on e6.

15 . . . c5

Smyslov is logically using his doubled c-pawns in order to renew the threat of . . . g4.

16 Bc3

Preparing a flight square for the knight on d2.

16 . . . b5

Another powerful pawn advance, with the threat of 17 . . . b4 forcing 18 Bd2 when 18 . . . g4 wins the embarrassed knight on f3.

17 b3
17 . . . Bb7
18 Ng3
18 . . . g4
19 Nd2
19 . . . Be7

Smyslov prepares to centralize his king and bring his rooks into play. 19 . . . Bg5 threatening . . . b4 also looks promising.

20 Nh5

White intends to use the f6 square, which has been weakened by the advance of Black's g-pawn.

20 . . . Kf7
21 Nf1
21 . . . Kg6!

Black encourages the invasion on f6.

22 Nf6

The alternative 22 Ng3 would be met by 22 . . . h5 followed by . . . h4 when White's minor pieces have been overwhelmed by Black's advancing hordes.

22 . . . Rad8

Occupying the open d-file and ensuring that White's active knight on f6 has no retreat.

23 Rad1

White challenges for control of the d-file.

23 . . . Rxd1
24 Rxd1
24 . . . Rd8

White must not be allowed to dominate the file.

25 Rxd8 Bxd8

White now has problems since he must guard against 26 . . . Nf4 threatening both 27 . . . Ne2+ and 27 . . . Nxg2.

26 Ne3

Black forcefully refutes this move.

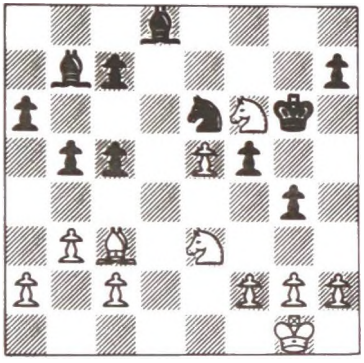


Diagram 40
Bondarevsky–Smyslov

26 . . . f4!
27 Nd1

The tactical justification is that 27 Nexg4 fails to 27 . . . h5 winning the helpless knight, while 27 Ned5 c6 is no better.

27 . . . Bxf6!

Smyslov gives up one of his bishops in order that he might win a pawn.

28 exf6
28 . . . Be4

The point of Black's previous move is that the knight no longer guards this square, and the white c-pawn is indefensible.

29 Bb2
29 . . . b4!

Although Smyslov could snatch a pawn with 29 . . . Bxc2 he notices that the white knight is decidedly short of squares—now . . . Bxc2 is an even more potent threat since the white knight is virtually immobilized.

30 f3
30 . . . Bxc2
31 Nf2 gxf3
32 gxf3
32 . . . Bb1

Black's 29 . . . b4 immobilized not only the white knight, but also White's queen-side pawns and White must lose yet another pawn since 33 a3 bxa3 34 Bxa3 loses the f6 pawn.

33 Ne4 Bxa2
34 Nd2

With this move White imprisons the black bishop, but Smyslov intends to get his bishop out on bail!

34 . . . a5!

Intending to free the bishop at the appropriate moment with . . . a4.

35 Kf2
35 . . . Nd4
36 Bxd4 cxd4

White had little choice but to capture on d4, otherwise he would have lost his b-pawn, e.g. 36 Ne4 Nxb3 and if 37 Ng5 (threatening 38 f7! winning) then Black simply plays 37 . . . Nd4 38 Ne4 Ne6 when White is finished.

37 Ke2
37 . . . Kxf6
38 Kd3
38 . . . Ke5
39 Kc2

39 Kc4 a4 40 Kxb4 Bxb3 is no better for White.

39 . . . a4

Smyslov chooses to free his bishop while he still can—White threatened 40 Kb2.

40 bxa4
40 . . . c5
41 a5
41 . . . c4
42 a6
42 . . . d3+
0–1

The three connected passed pawns plus the advantage of bishop versus knight decide the issue quickly. The finish could have been 43 Kb2 c3+ 44 Kxa2 cxd2 45 a7 d1=Q 46 a8=Q b3+ 47 Kb2 Qc2+ 48 Ka3 (48 Ka1 Qc1 is mate) 48 . . . Qa2+ winning the white queen and the game.

While we are on the subject of studying Master games, it should be mentioned that a lot can be gained by discovering a Master or Grandmaster whose style of play you admire and then trying to emulate it. Such trends in style of play are evident throughout the history of chess. The ex-world champion Bobby Fischer greatly admired Morphy and Capablanca and his own style of play was often likened to theirs. Similarly the American Grandmaster Walter Browne adopted a similar opening repertoire to Fischer and tried to emulate his style of play.

Because the middle game is that stage of chess when a player can be most creative, it follows that this is the period when his style of play will be most evident. Consequently, studying complete Master games should reveal how top-class players handle certain types of position, and the average player should get an insight into a variety of middle game policies, such as how to play against certain pawn configurations, or how to make the best use of a bishop versus a knight, etc. The middle game in chess is full of different positions with new and exciting problems, and an effective way of meeting this never-ending challenge is the continual study of Master games!

4 Pawn Structures and Pawn Weaknesses

'Pawns are the soul of Chess' wrote Philidor, and he was right! Although the pawn is the lowliest unit on the chess-board, its influence upon the course of a game is far greater than might at first be imagined.

Many people think that Philidor's famous quote refers to the ability of the pawns to promote—a form of reincarnation, in which the analogy with the soul is clear. His analogy is more subtle than this, however, for, if we consider the soul as being the invisible underlying influence upon a human being, then we can draw a comparison with the pawn on the chess-board. *Collectively* the pawns are capable of exerting a powerful influence on the course of a game, which is not always immediately obvious to the lesser player. The reason for this influence is that pawn structures tend to be static by nature—that is, they do not change very quickly, so weak squares and weak pawns are very much in evidence.

We shall now consider some of the special features in pawn structures, paying particular attention to pawn weaknesses.

DOUBLED PAWNS

The theory of doubled pawns is very complicated, for one must consider: are they isolated, mobile or static, part of a pawn majority or minority,, etc?

Generally, doubled pawns confer some form of disadvantage, with varying degrees of seriousness. The main advantage gained from having doubled pawns, is the open or half-open file that is inevitably created for the rooks.

We now consider a few examples of doubled pawns in middle game positions; it is worth mentioning that doubled pawns are

sometimes an important feature of certain opening variations. For instance, consider the Ruy Lopez exchange variation given on page 33; White gives up the bishop pair in order to double Black's c-pawns; the position tends to be roughly balanced with Black's two bishops providing compensation. Another opening variation, featuring doubled pawns, occurs in the Caro–Kann after the moves 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 Nxe4 Nf6 5 Nxf6 when Black can capture with either his e- or g-pawn. The capture 5 . . . exf6 gives the diagrammed position:

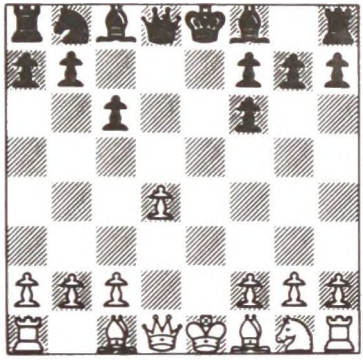


Diagram 41

The doubled pawn has the effect of providing White with a queenside pawn majority (with a potential passed d-pawn), while Black seems to have very little in the way of compensation, except for free development for his pieces.

Our first middle game example illustrates the danger of doubled pawns in the vicinity of the king:

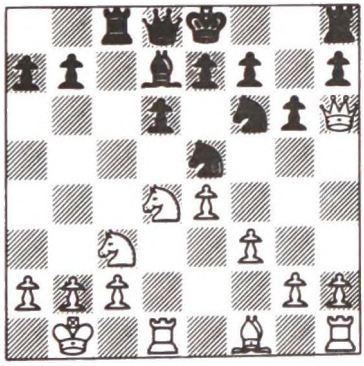


Diagram 42
Nunn–Mestel
Hastings
1977/8

The diagrammed position was reached in a Sicilian Defence, Dragon variation, between two of England's leading players. Jonathan Mestel now played a standard exchange sacrifice (rook for minor piece) in order to give White doubled isolated pawns on the c-file, and to denude the white king. The game continued 12 . . . Rxc3! 13 bxc3 Qb6+ 14 Ka1 Qc5 15 Qd2 (the queen comes back to defend the shattered queen side, but this allows Black to castle and mobilize his remaining rook. A better try was 15 Kb2 when Black can play for a draw if he wishes by 15 . . . Qb6+ 16 Ka1—self-pinning with 16 Nb3? would invite 16 . . . a5 followed by . . . a4—16 . . . Qc5 17 Kb2 Qb6+ repeating moves). 15 . . . O–O Black has definite compensation for his material deficit, because of his long-term prospects against White's permanently vulnerable queen side. 16 Rb1 b6 17 Bb5 Rc8 18 Bxd7 Nfxd7 19 f4 Nc4 the knight occupies a powerful outpost created by the exchange sacrifice, since the absence of White's b- and d-pawns make the c4 square unassailable. 20 Qc1 a6 21 h4 e5 Black dislodges White's centrally placed knight 22 fxe5 dxe5 23 Ne2 Qf2 24 Qd1 (24 Qf1 Qxf1 25 Rbxf1 Nc5 gives Black a good ending) 24 . . . Nc5 25 h5 White is hoping to create threats down the h-file 25 . . . Ne3 26 Qd2 Nxe4 27 Qd3 Nxc3! 28 hxg6 (28 Nxc3 fails to 28 . . . Nxc2+ 29 Kb2 Nb4+ 30 Qe2 Nd3+ 31 Ka1 Qd4 – +) 28 . . . hxg6 29 Rxb6 e4 (White was threatening 30 Rxg6+ fxg6 31 Qxg6+ with a mating attack.) 30 Qxa6 (30 Rxg6+ fxg6 31 Qd7 Nxc2+ 32 Kb2 Na4+ is hopeless for White; Mestel now finishes the game with a neat combination 30 . . . Nxc2+ 31 Kb2 Qxb6+! 0–1 (32 Qxb6 is answered by 32 . . . Na4+ when Black emerges with an extra piece and pawn).

The next example comes from the Catalan opening, and illustrates the serious problems posed by the weakness of isolated doubled pawns on a semi-open file:

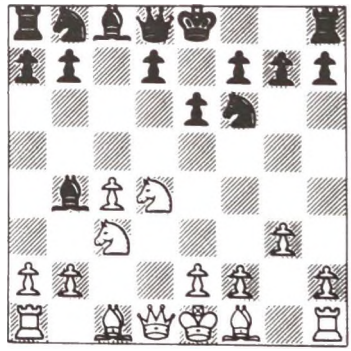


Diagram 43
Lombard–Rogoff
Biel Interzonal
1976

Rogoff played 6 . . . Ne4 applying pressure to the c3 square. White cannot avoid doubled c-pawns now. The game continued 7 Qd3 Qa5 (adding to the pressure against c3, and intending to answer 8 Qxe4 with Bxc3+ 9 bxc3 Qxc3+ winning the rook on a1) 8 Nc2 Bxc3+ 9 bxc3 Nc5! (as in the previous example, the knight occupies a strong outpost, blockading the c-pawns) 10 Qd2 b6 11 Bg2 Bb7 12 Bxb7 Nxb7 13 Ba3 Nc6 14 O–O d6! 15 Rab1 (if 15 Bxd6 then 15 . . . O–O–O! wins the pinned bishop) 15 . . . Qa4 16 Rfd1. (The c-pawn is indefensible since 16 Ne3? loses the bishop on a3 and 16 Qd3 is met by . . . Rd8 and . . . Nc5 driving the queen away) 16 . . . O–O 17 Rb5 Qxc4 18 Rg5 f6! (White intended to play—19 Rxg7 + Kxg7 20 Qg5 + Kh8 21 Qf6+, etc., with a draw by perpetual check) 19 Rh5 Qxa2—yet another pawn falls and Black had little trouble in winning in a few more moves. The weak c-pawns always promised to be a handicap for White.

The reader should search through Master games for examples of how to handle or how to play against doubled pawns. The following game illustrates some of the problems that arise from having a doubled pawn.

Nisman–Karpov: Soviet Team Championship 1968
1 c4 Nf6 2 Nc3 e6 3 d4 Bb4 4 a3 Bxc3+ 5 bxc3 c5 6 e3 Nc6 7 Ne2 b6 8 Ng3.

Now cover the page and try to guess Black's moves:

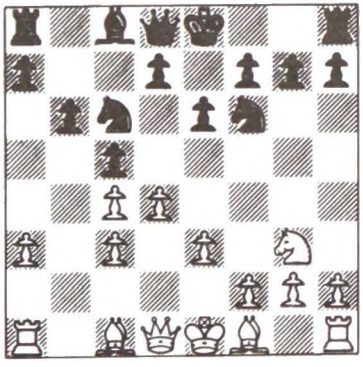


Diagram 44
Nisman–Karpov

Karpov has blockaded the double pawn in standard fashion and now he uses a common method of attacking the pawns.

8 . . . Ba6
9 Bd3
9 . . . Na5
10 Qe2

White defends the pawn adequately but his position is very passive.

10 . . . d6

Black prepares to set up a central pawn wedge.

11 Bb2
11 . . . Qd7!

The Queen is well placed on this square to add to the pressure against c4 with a timely . . . Qa4.

12 e4

White threatens 13 e5 vacating the e4 square for his pieces.

12 . . . O–O–O!

A clever defence to 13 e5 which simply loses a pawn to 13 . . . dxe5. The alternative 12 . . . e5 would allow the invasion 13 Nf5.

13 a4

White rules out a future . . . Qa4.

13 . . . h5

Karpov wishes to play . . . e5 fixing the centre, without having to worry about Nf5, so first he plans to dislodge the white knight.

14 O–O h4
15 Nh1 e5
16 f4
16 . . . Nh5!

The f4 square is vulnerable especially as 17 g3 is very unappealing. 17 Bc1 loses a pawn to 17 . . . Nb3 18 Rb1 Nxc1 19 Rbxc1 Nxf4.

17 fxe5 dxe5
18 d5 Nf4

White has a protected passed pawn, but it is effectively supervised, and the white central pawn mass is a stationary target. Queen moves

would now lose the c-pawn, so White gives up the exchange in order to activate his pawns, but the weakness of the doubled c-pawns is a great handicap!

19 Rxf4 exf4
20 e5
20 . . . h3!

Karpov wishes to prise open the white king position.

21 g4 Kb8

White threatened 22 Bf5, and this move sets a cunning trap.

22 Bc1?

Nisman tries to activate this poorly placed bishop with 23 Bxf4 which looks very appealing; while 22 . . . g5 invites the knight manoeuvre 23 Nf2– e4– f6. The move played allows a decisive combination:

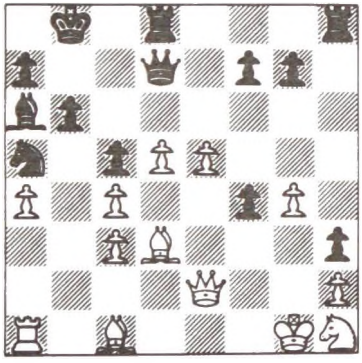


Diagram 45
Nisman–Karpov

22 . . . Bxc4!
23 Bxc4 Nxc4
24 Qxc4 Qxg4+

The white queen has been deflected from the defence of the g-pawn, and the point of the combination is that after 25 Kf2 Qg2+ wins the knight, which is no longer defended because of the Bc1 move. Therefore . . .

25 Ng3 Rh4!

The only move to ensure the win of the piece.

26 Qxf4 Qxf4
27 Bxf4 Rxf4

with an easy win for Black.

ISOLATED PAWNS

The isolated pawn—a pawn without a pawn of its own colour on a neighbouring file, is normally considered to be a weakness, simply because it cannot enjoy the protection of one of its colleagues. There are numerous examples in chess literature of an isolated pawn falling by the wayside and resulting in the loss of the game. Consider the following example:

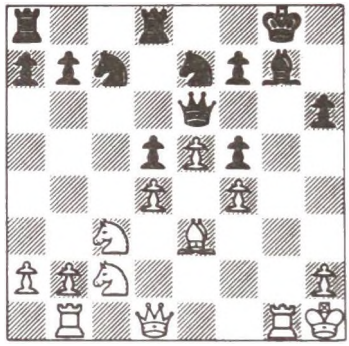


Diagram 46
D. J. King–Povah
Surrey Trophy
1978

Although Black's four isolated pawns are adequately guarded at the moment, the strain soon proved to be too much for the author, who had the misfortune to have this position against one of his pupils, whom he had evidently taught too well! White played 22 Qd3 Rac8 23 Bf2! (the 'bad' bishop comes to life with the annoying threat of 24 Bh4 and 25 Bxf6 undermining Black's defence of the f-pawn) 23 . . . Ng6 24 Bg3 h5 (Black tries to lash out before White can play 25 Ne3) 25 Rbf1 Kf8 26 Ne3 h4 27 Be1 Bh6 28 Ne2 Black is now devoid of counterplay and his position falls apart at the seams. 28 . . . Qa6 Nxa6 30 Rg2 White does not rush to capture the hapless f-pawn, but guards his second rank 30 . . . Ke8 31 Nxf5 h3 32 Rgf2 Bf8 33 Ne3 1–0.

Our next example is an impressive Master game between two contemporary giants of the chess-board.

Portisch–Spassky, Candidates Match, Geneva 1977
1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 (the Queen's Gambit Accepted, which is normally overshadowed by the more popular declined variations, which start with 2 . . . e6) 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 e3 Bg4 5 Bxc4 (White regains his pawn with a slight initiative, since he has a two-one central pawn majority, and he should be able to increase his central control with an inevitable e4) 5 . . . e6 6 Nc3 Nbd7 7 O–O Bd6 8 h3 Bh5 9 e4 e5 10 Be2! O–O 11 dxe5 Nxe5 12 Nd4! Bg6 13 Bg5 Re8 14 Ndb5 Nc6 (not 14 . . . Be7? 15 f4 winning a piece because of the threat 16 f5) 15 Nxd6 cxd6 16 f3!±.

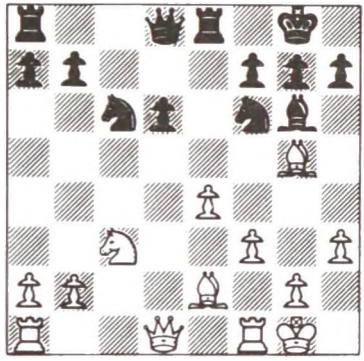


Diagram 47
Portisch–Spassky
Candidates' Match
Geneva
1977

Portisch has inflicted an IQP (Isolated Queen's Pawn) upon his opponent, and he now increases the pressure so that Spassky has to make further concessions if he is to maintain counter-chances. It should be noted that White has two other advantages in the diagrammed position; first he has 'the two bishops' and second Black's bishop is a very poor piece indeed. Play continued—16 . . . h6 17 Bh4 Bh7 (17 . . . Qb6+ fails to 18 Rf2 Qxb2? 19 Bxf6 gxf6 20 Nd5 + –) 18 Rf2 g5 (Black breaks the annoying pin on the h4–d8 diagonal, but weakens his king side in the process). 19 Bg3 Qb6 20 Bc4! (White does not rush to take the d-pawn, but protects his b-pawn while activating his white-squared bishop) 20 . . . Ne5 21 Bb3 Rac8 22 Qf1! (threatening 23 f4) 22 . . . Kg7 23 Qb5! + – (Black cannot exchange queens, since 23 . . . Qxb5 24 Nxb5 forks two pawns; neither can he allow 24 Qxb6 inflicting further pawn weaknesses) 23 . . . Qc7 24 Rd1 Nh5 25 Bh2 (not 25 Bxe5 dxe5 ridding Black of his IQP) 25 . . . b6

26 Rfd2 Portisch piles up on the weakness 26 . . . Qc5+ 27 Kh1 Nf4 28 Rxd6 Qxb5 29 Nxb5 Re7 30 Nc3 White with an extra pawn and the better position consolidates, before rapidly concluding the game 30 . . . Nfg6 31 Nd5 Ree8 32 Ne3 heading for the powerful outpost on f5 32 . . . Nh4 33 Bxe5 Rxe5 34 Rd7 Bg6 35 Nc4! Rec5 36 Nd6 Rf8 37 Rxa7 another pawn falls and the end is in sight 37 . . . h5 38 Kg1 g4 39 f4 Rd8 1–0 Spassky resigned before Portisch could play 40 f5 driving the bishop away from his defensive duties.

Notice in this game how the permanent weakness of the d-pawn forced Black to seek counterplay with his king-side pawn advances, which only increased his problems. Portisch never allowed Black any counter-chances, and captured the IQP at his leisure. It would be fair to say that the result was never in doubt from move 16 onward.

The isolated pawn and particularly the IQP however, need not always be a disadvantage. It is true that the isolani will become weaker as the game progresses towards an ending: certain middle game positions, however, are enhanced by the presence of an IQP who can control important central squares. Consider the following example from one of the IQP's leading exponents Victor Korchnoi:

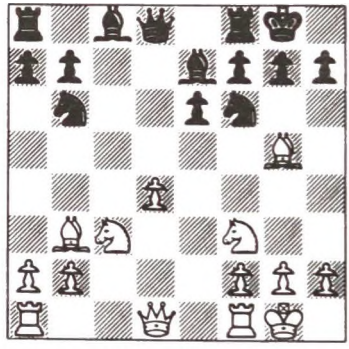


Diagram 48
Korchnoi–A. Zaitsev
30th USSR Championships 1962

Zaitsev played 11 . . . Nfd5 in order to blockade the IQP before applying pressure to the weakness. However, Korchnoi demonstrates in masterly fashion how the IQP facilitates central control and offers good king-side attacking prospects. Another instructive game from this position which the reader might wish to refer to, is Botvinnik–Vidmar, Nottingham, 1936.

Korchnoi continued 12 Bxe7 Qxe7 13 Re1 Rd8 14 Rc1 notice how

White's rooks have occupied the open and semi-open files either side of the IQP 14 . . . Nf6 15 Qe2 Qb4 16 Ne4 Korchnoi is trying to remove Black's solitary king-side defensive piece—the knight on f6—16 . . . Nbd5 17 Nc5 Qa5 (Attempts to displace White's dominant knight from c5 with 17 . . . b6 are extremely dangerous, e.g. 18 Rc4 Qb5 19 Ba4 Qa5 20 Bc6 threatening 21 Ra4, etc.) 18 Ne5:

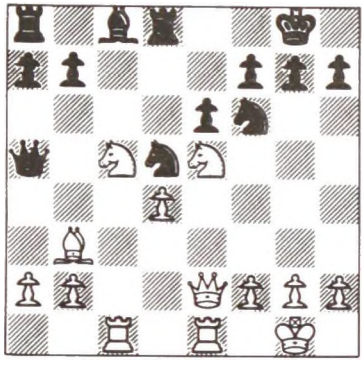


Diagram 49
Korchnoi–Zaitsev

Almost an ideal position with an IQP! Although Black has the pawn firmly blockaded, White's pieces are occupying such dominant posts that further resistance is short-lived. 18 . . . Qb6 19 Qf3 Rf8 20 g4 White's position is so overwhelming that he can afford to weaken his king side in order to gain more space on that flank 20 . . . Qd8 21 g5 Ne8 22 h4 f6 23 g6! a neat tactic which forces further weaknesses in Black's position 23 . . . h6 (23 . . . fxe5 fails to 24 gxh7 Kxh7 25 Qxf8 + –; while 23 . . . hxg6 24 Nxg6 Rf7 25 Qh5 is no better) 24 Nf7 Rxf7 (the alternatives are unappealing, e.g. 24 . . . Qe7? 25 Bxd5 + – or 24 . . . Qb6 25 Nxe6 Bxe6 26 Rxe6 Qxe6 27 Bxd5 with a decisive attack) 25 gxf7+ Kxf7 26 Nxe6! Bxe6 27 Rxe6 Kxe6 28 Qe4+ Kf7 29 Bxd5+ 1–0. After 29 . . . Kf8 30 Qe6 Nd6 31 Re1 White has the unstoppable threat of Qg8 mate.

To summarize the relative merits of an IQP, we can say that in an endgame it will generally prove to be a weakness, while in a middle game it can often confer certain advantages, such as allowing greater piece mobility and providing support points at e5 and c5. Therefore it should come as no surprise to find that many players willingly opt for the IQP, for as Tarrasch has said: 'Before the endgame the gods have placed the middle game!'

BACKWARD PAWNS

The 'backward' pawn is a pawn which, despite having one or two colleagues on the adjacent files, cannot enjoy their protection, simply because he has been left behind. It is the square in front of the backward pawn that causes most of the problems because it tends to fall under enemy control. In this respect the backward pawn is similar to the isolated pawn, except it is invariably considered a weakness without offering any counterbalancing advantages.

Our first example of a backward pawn is a fairly typical case arising from the Sicilian Defence:

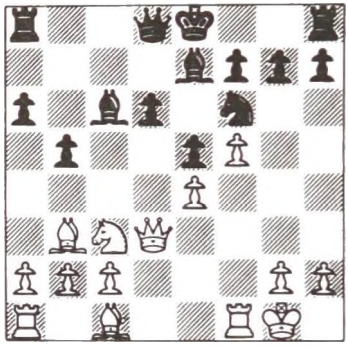


Diagram 50
Fischer–Gadia
Mar del Plata
1960

A quick assessment reveals that White enjoys a spatial advantage and a slight lead in development. But there is another very important factor in this position, namely Black's backward pawn on d6. This weak pawn not only restricts the mobility of Black's dark-squared bishop, but it is going to require piece-protection for the rest of the game. If Black could liquidate his backward d-pawn with . . . d5 then he will have solved most of his problems, hence White concentrates his forces on the weak d5 square which promises to be an excellent outpost for White's pieces. Notice also that White has a backward pawn on e4; this pawn is not as vulnerable as his counterpart on d6, because he is not on a semi-open file and the e5 square is not available as an outpost to Black's pieces.

Fischer exploits his positional advantage (±) very effectively. Play continued—13 Bg5! (the exchange Bxf6 will enhance White's control of the d5 square) 13 . . . Qb6+ 14 Kh1 O–O 15 Bxf6 Bxf6 16 Bd5!

The exchange of light-squared bishops will leave White with a 'good' knight versus 'bad' bishop situation—the resulting position is remarkably similar to the Povah–Nielsen position considered on page 59—and the winning strategy was more or less the same. 16 . . . Rac8 17 Bxc6 Rxc6 18 Rad1 (since this rook eventually returns to a1, there might be a case for playing 18 Rfd1 intending Nd5, c3 and a4 as in the game) 18 . . . Rfc8 19 Nd5 Qd8 20 c3 Be7 Black's weak d-pawn and the white knight on d5 give Fischer an overwhelming positional advantage, and he now switches his attention to Black's vulnerable queen-side pawns. Black is so tied up it is difficult to find an active plan for him. 21 Ra1! f6 22 a4! White intends to give Black an isolated pawn on the queen side: yet another weakness to worry about. Gadia now blunders, but his position is disintegrating anyway. 22 . . . Rb8? 23 Nxe7+ resigns. Black loses a rook after 23 . . . Qxe7 24 Qd5+—an instructive minature from Fischer.

Our next example features what might be called a 'semi-backward' pawn:

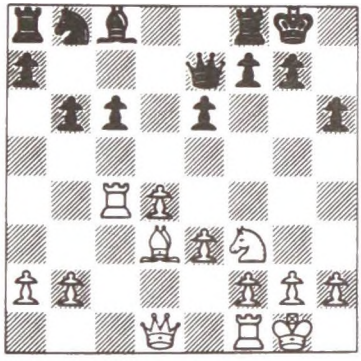


Diagram 51
Larsen–Donner
BBC TV Master Game
1978

White has a lead in development which is a temporary advantage, but more significantly he has the permanent advantage of the better pawn structure. Larsen has no pawn weaknesses at all, whilst Donner has a weak pawn on c6; this pawn is 'semi-backward' because it does not enjoy the protection of a colleague and the only way of achieving this aim . . . c5, is very difficult to play. The game continued 13 . . . Bb7 (the immediate 13 . . . c5 gives Donner an isolated c-pawn after 14 dxc5 bxc5) 14 Ne5! (Larsen occupies a powerful central outpost and increases the pressure against c6, thereby ruling out . . . Nd7) 14 . . . Qd6 15 Qf3 (the pin on the long white diagonal

now makes . . . c5 impossible; Donner's position is at breaking-point since he cannot defend against the pile-up on the weak c6 pawn, e.g. 15 . . . Re8? fails to 16 Qxf7+ and other moves are answered by Be4 and Rfc1 when c6 falls) 15 . . . f6?! Donner attempts to dislodge the powerful knight on e5, but this move just causes further white-squared weaknesses in his king side. It is quite common for a player under pressure to have to make further positional concessions in order to stay in the game. One might even say, 'weaknesses breed weaknesses'. 16 Qe4! fxe5? (A terrible blunder, but the alternative 16 . . . f5 leaves the white knight in complete control, and creates a further weakness at e6) 17 dxe5! (Donner was relying on 17 Qh7+ Kf7 18 Bg6+ when he can use the f6 square, but this interpolation rules out that possibility) 17 . . . Qd8? (the last try was 17 . . . Qxd3 18 Qxd3 Ba6 but 19 Rd1 Bxc4 20 Qxc4 is hopeless for Black) 18 Qh7+ Kf7 19 Bg6+ Ke7 20 Qxg7+ Rf7 21 Qxf7 mate.

Our final example in this section shows what may be termed a 'screened backward' pawn, which often arises in certain variations of the Sicilian Defence.

Sicilian Defence, Lasker–Pelikan variation
1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 e5 6 Ndb5 d6 7 Nd5 Nxd5 8 exd5 Nb8 9 c4 Be7 10 Bd3 O–O 11 O–O Nd7 12 Be3 a6 13 Nc3

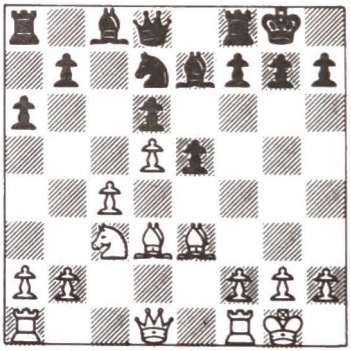


Diagram 52
Lein–Bilek
Rome
1976

Black has a backward pawn on d6, but it clearly is not such a problem as in our previous examples, and the main issue in this position is White's queen-side majority against Black's king-side majority. Play continued—13 . . . f5 14 f3! (with this move White stems the tide of Black's intended king-side expansion, since 14 . . . f4? 15 Bf2 leaves

White in control of the e4 square) 14 . . . Bg5 Black strives to exchange off his 'bad' bishop, so White naturally declines. 15 Bf2! g6 16 b4. Now Lein starts his own build-up on the queen side; an advance which is much more difficult to thwart. 16 . . . b6 17 Rb1 Rf7 18 Na4 Kh8 19 Re1 Bh4 20 g3 Bf6 21 c5! after patient manoeuvring White is ready to 'break' on the queen side in order to create a passed d-pawn 21 . . . bxc5 22 bxc5 Nxc5 23 Nxc5 dxc5 24 Bc4!± Lein secures his newly formed passed pawn, and the activity of his pieces easily outweighs his pawn deficit. 24 . . . Rd7 25 Qb3 (not 25 Bxc5? Qc7 winning one of the bishops) 25 . . . Bb7 26 Red1 Rc8 27 Rb2 Rcc7 (If 27 . . . e4 28 d6!! givesWhite a potent attack, e.g. 28 . . . Bxb2 29 Qxb2+ Rg7 30 d7 Rb8 31 Qe5—threatening Qxb8!—31 . . . Ra8 32 Bxc5 when White is in complete control; alternatively 30 . . . Rc7 31 Qf6! Qxf6 32 d8=Q+ wins; or if 28 . . . Rxd6 29Rxd6 Qxd6 30 Qxb7 Qd1 + 31 Bf1 + −) 28 Re2 Kg7 29 Be1! White now switches his pressure to Black's e-pawn 29 . . . Rc8 30 Bc3 Qc7 31 Qb2 notice the pile-up technique 31 . . . Rf8 (Attempts to hold the e-pawn are easily refuted, e.g. 31 . . . Re7? 32 d6+ − or 31 . . . Re8 32 fa+ −) 32 Bxe5 Qd8 33 f4+ − Lein has regained his pawn with a dominating position and he soon wins. 33 . . . h5 (33 . . . Bxd5? loses to 34 Bxd5 Rxd5 35 Qb7+ + −) 34 Qc3 Bc6 (34 . . . Bxd5 still fails to 35 Bxd5 Rxd5 36 Rxd5 Qxd5 37 Bxf6+ Rxf6 38 Re7+ winning) 35 Qe3 Bb5 (this time 35 . . . Bxd5 fails to 36 Red2 Bc6 37 Rxd7+ Bxd7 38 Bxf6+ Rxf6 39 Qd3 winning the pinned bishop) 36 Bxb5 axb5 37 Qxc5 Qa5 38 Kg2 Rff7 39 Qc6 Ra7 40 d6 Qa4 41 Rd4 resigns. White's d-pawn proves to be too much.

THE MINORITY ATTACK

The Minority Attack is a special feature applicable to certain pawn structures. It is most commonly seen in the Queen's Gambit Declined, but it is not exclusive to this opening. However, the QGD frequently gives rise to positions where the minority attack is White's most logical plan, hence it provides us with most of our examples.

The basic objective of a minority attack is to weaken the opponent's pawn structure by creating either an isolated pawn, or a backward pawn on a semi-open file.

Our first example comes from the Exchange variation of the Queen's Gambit Declined:

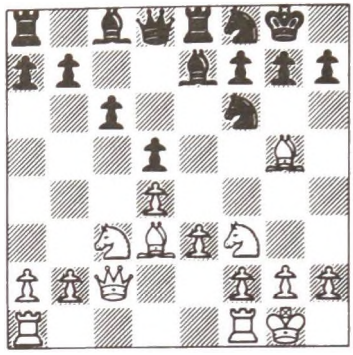


Diagram 53

This is a standard position which has been reached in literally thousands of games. White has several moves here, but initiating the minority attack with 11 Rab1 is the most logical continuation. Basically White intends to play b4, b5 (supported by a4 if necessary) and bxc6 to create a backward pawn on c6. If Black captures on b5 then he will have an IQP, and White will have pressure against Black's b-pawn; should Black play . . . b6, then another minority attack ensues with a4–a5.

In Buslayev–Gedevanishvili, USSR, 1970, play continued from the diagrammed position with—11 Rab1 Ne4 Black cannot afford to be idle, he must seek active counterplay against White's straightforward but effective plan. 12 Bxe7 Qxe7 13 b4 Bg4? (Black should try to slow down White's ambitions with 13 . . . a6! although 14 a4 Ng6 15 b5 axb5 16 axb5 Nxc3 17 Qxc3 Bg4 18 Nd2 still leaves White slightly better) 14 Ne5 Nxc3 15 Qxc3 Bh5 16 Bf5 (not 16 b5 f6 17 Nf3 Bf3 18 gxf3 when Black will always have the prospect of counterplay on the king side) 16 . . . Qg5? (16 . . . a6 was still advisable) 17 Bh3 f6 18 Nd3 Black's queen is now cut off from the queen side and the black c-pawn is beginning to look very shaky indeed 18 . . . Re4 19 Nf4 Ng6? (Black misses the chance to bolster the c-pawn with 19 . . . Be8!) 20 Nxh5 Qxh5 21 b5± Rae8 (21 . . . Ne7 does not help after 22 bxc6 bxc6 23 Rb7 when White holds all the trumps!) 22 bxc6 bxc6 23 Qxc6 White's strategy has triumphed perfectly, for he has not only won a pawn, but his major pieces are ready to invade the vacuum created on the queen side and Black's a- and d-pawns make prime targets. 23 . . . Nh4 24 Rb5 Qe2 25 Qxd5+ Kh8 26 Qxe4! resigns.

It should be noted in Diagram 53 that Black could also launch a minority attack against White's e-pawn which is also on a semi-open file. However, it is very cumbersome and dangerous for Black to carry out such a minority attack, since the advance of the f- and g-pawns would weaken his king position.

In the last example Black tried to counter the inevitable minority attack by initiating action on the king side. Unfortunately though, his king-side ambitions never really got under way. There are several other methods of trying to counter the minority attack, but a fully satisfactory answer has yet to be found. The various plans are:

1. King-side action using the semi-open e-file and particularly the e4 square. However, the attack is difficult as White has no weaknesses on the king side.
2. The minority attack can be delayed by . . . a5, but a3 and b4 will generally come anyway, so this is only a temporary measure.
3. The creation of a passed rook's pawn by . . . a6, so that a4 and b5 can be answered by . . . cxb5 axb5 and then . . . a5.
4. Prepare to meet b5 with . . . c5.
5. Prevent b5 by playing . . . b5 oneself and then try to use the weak c4 square.

Although plans 3 and 4 can often work, they are basically passive in nature and rely on White's playing b5. The fifth plan is a direct attempt to counter White's minority attack, but the creation of a permanently weak pawn on c6 necessitates accurate timing if Black is not to run into even greater troubles. Our next example illustrates just this problem: the game Donner–Hort, Wijk aan Zee 1973, continued from Diagram 53 with 11 Rab1 a5 12 Rfc1 Ne4 13 Bxe7 Qxe7 14 a3 Ng6?! (if Black wishes to use the . . . b5 plan, he wants his knight on d6 so that he can use the c4 square—therefore, 14 . . . Nd6 was more logical) 15 b4 axb4 16 axb4 b5? (16 . . . Nd6 threatening . . . b5 and . . . Nc4 was better, but White would play the immediate 17 b5 with the initiative):

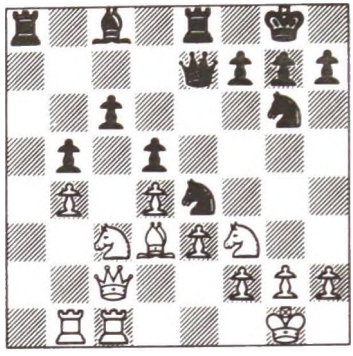


Diagram 54
Donner–Hort
Wijk aan Zee
1973

17 Bxe4! ± Donner rightfully ascertains that his knights will be able to dominate Black's weak dark squares, e.g. Nf3–d2–b3–c5, etc. 17 . . . dxe4 18 Nd2 Bf5 19 Ne2 Bd7 20 Nb3 h5 (Hort is positionally lost on the queen side so he must seek counterplay on the king side; 20 . . . Qxb4? would lose a piece to 21 Nc5) 21 Nc5 h4 (21 . . . Bc8 preserving the bishop for the king-side attack was better) 22 Nxd7 Qxd7 23 h3 (not 23 Qxc6? Qg4 24 Qc2 h3 25 Ng3 Nh4! when Black has dangerous counterplay) 23 . . . Re6 24 Ra1—with Black tied down to his backward c-pawn White takes control of the open a-file—24 . . . Rxa1 25 Rxa1 Qd5 (intending . . . Qg5) 26 Ra8+ Kh7 27 Qc5! Qxc5 28 bxc5 f5 29 Kf1 Re7 30 Ke1 Black's weak pawn on c6 guarantees White a lasting initiative. 30 . . . Rd7 31 Kd2 Kh6 32 Kc2 Kg5 33 Ra6 Rc7 34 Kb3 f4? (34 . . . Ne7 was possible but 35 Nf4 followed by Kb4 and d5 is better for White) 35 Nc3 Kf5 36 d5! cxd5 37 Nxb5 Rb7 (37 . . . Rxc5? loses to 38 Nd4+! Kg5 39 Ne6+ +– or 38 . . . Ke5? 39 Re6 mate) 38 Rb6 Rxb6 39 cxb6 and Donner's b-pawn soon decided matters.

In conclusion the reader should note the very powerful influence of the prevailing pawn structures in the examples quoted, for, as stated at the beginning of this chapter, the pawn structure can often dictate the whole course of a game!

5 Tactical Complexities of the Middle Game

In the previous two chapters we covered what we might call the basic positional elements of the middle game, e.g. 'good' knight versus 'bad' bishop and vice versa; the two bishops; open files; the seventh and eighth ranks; weak pawn structures. Now we shall take a detailed look at the tactical aspects of the middle game, paying particular attention to the co-ordination of the pieces in combinations and sacrifices.

COMBINATIONS

The basic principles of chess combinations can be listed as follows:

1. Pin
2. Skewer
3. Fork
4. Discovered Checks, etc.
5. Overloading

We will now consider these principles in turn, but it should be noted that a combination may be prefaced by, or incorporate, a sacrifice. Therefore we shall devote the latter part of this chapter to the sacrifice.

1. The Pin

The Pin is one of the simplest but most effective weapons found in chess, and forms the basis of many combinational finishes. Our first example illustrates a series of pins forcing an opponent to tie up his pieces, until one final pin proves to be decisive:

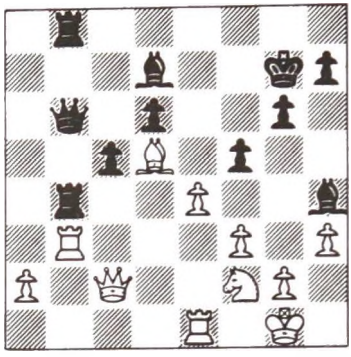


Diagram 55
M. Harmonist–S. Tarrasch Nuremberg 1892

Tarrasch plays 28 . . . Ba4 pinning White's rook to his queen and forcing White's reply—29 Qb2+ Bf6 30 Rxb4 cxb4! The g1–a7 diagonal is opened for the most effective pin of all—a pin against the king! 31 Qc1 (if 31 Qe2 Re8 threatening to intensify the pressure with . . . Bd4) 31 . . . Bd4 32 Re2 (32 Qd2 loses material to the skewer 32 . . . Bc3; while 32 Rf1 is met by 32 . . . Bb5) 32 . . . fxe4 33 Bxe4 (recapturing with the pawn exposes the pinned knight to further pressure down the f-file, e.g. 33 fxe4? Rf8 34 Qe1—not 34 Qd2 or 34 Qf1, both of which are answered by 34 . . . Bb5 – +—34 . . . Bb5 35 Rc2 Bd3 36 Rd2 Bc3 winning material) 33 . . . Re8! (setting up another pin on the e-file and threatening . . . d5 when the bishop would have to move allowing the exchange of rooks, removing one of the knight's defenders, e.g. 34 . . . d5 35 Bd3 Rxe2 36 Bxe2 Bxf2+ – +) 34 Qd2 (34 Qe1 is met by 34 . . . Bb5 35 Rc2 d5 winning the pinned bishop) 34 . . . Bb5 35 resigns. White must lose material, e.g. 35 Bd3 Rxe2 36 Qxe2 sees the white queen overworked, while 35 Re1 fails to 35 . . . d5 36 Bxd5 Bxf2+ 37 Qxf2 Rxe1+ winning; a standard pin device!

The power of the pin is well illustrated in another one of Troitsky's studies:

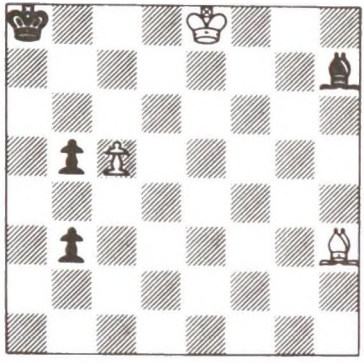


Diagram 56
Study by A. Troitsky
1926

The winning procedure is as follows—1 c6 b2 (1 . . . Kb8 trying to stop White's c-pawn is no better, e.g. 2 Kd8 b2 3 c7+ Ka7 4 c8=Q b1=Q 5 Qc7+ Ka8 6 Bg2+ Be4 when the pin on the a8–h1 diagonal allows White to play 7 Kc8! threatening Qa5 or Qb8 mate without having to fear checks on c4; Black's last try 7 . . . Qc2 fails to 8 Bxe4+ Qxe4 when White mates) 2 c7 b1=Q 3 c8=Q+ Ka7 4 Qc7+ Ka8 (not 4 . . . Ka6 5 Bc8 mate) 5 Bg2+ Be4 6 Qh7!! A brilliant 'cross-pin' which either wins the black queen or forces mate thus 6 . . . Kb8 7 Bxe4 attacking the black queen and threatening Qb7 mate; the only effective alternative is 6 . . . Bxg2 which loses the queen to 7 Qxb1, when White's task is easy.

Another example of a potent pin was seen in the game between Nimzovich and Tartakover, Carlsbad 1911:

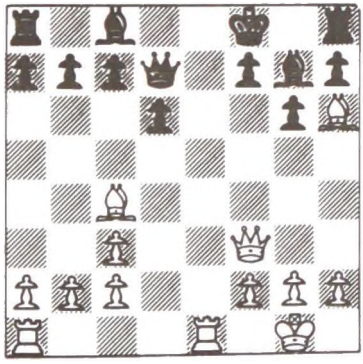


Diagram 57
Nimzovich–Tartakover
Carlsbad
1911

White's free development clearly gives him the advantage, although Tartakover appears to have a reasonably solid position and the

exchange of dark-squared bishops will allow . . . Kg7 and the activation of his king's rook. Unfortunately for Tartakover his bishop on g7 is weak because it is pinned to his king, and Nimzovich now takes full advantage of this fact as follows—1 Qf6! Rg8 (1 . . . Bxf6 is illegal and 1 . . . Bxh6 allows 2 Qxh8 mate) 2 Bxg7+ Rxg7 3 Bxf7! wins. The bishop is immune since 3 . . . Rxf7 4 Qh8 is mate and 3 . . . Qxf7 4 Qd8+ mates next move, and there is no way to meet White's numerous threats.

2. The Skewer

The skewer is a form of inverted pin, where the more valuable piece is in the direct line of fire, and when he moves a lesser-valued colleague comes under attack.

The skewer as a tactical device is less common than the pin, and particularly so in the middle game when the early development of the minor pieces gives rise to many potential pins. When a skewer does arise, however, it can be quite devastating, as in the following example:

Espeli–Andersen, Oslo 1952

1 e4 c6 2 c4 d5 3 cxd5 cxd5 4 Bb5+? (a poor move at this stage, but quite playable after 4 exd5 Nf6 5 Bb5+ etc.) 4 . . . Bd7 5 Qa4? (compounding the error) 5 . . . dxe4 6 Bxd7+ Nxd7 7 Qxe4 Nc5 8 Qc4 Nd3 9 Ke2 Rc8!:

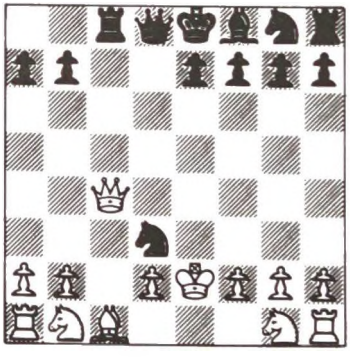


Diagram 58
Espeli–Andersen
Oslo
1952

This skewer on the c-file leads to a crippling state of affairs for White—10 Qxd3? (White could have spared himself with 10 Qb5+ Qd7 11 Qxd7+ Kxd7 12 Nc3) 10 . . . Qxd3+ 11 Kxd3 Rxc1 12 Ke2 g6

13 resigns! The pin along the back rank is so potent that White is faced with inevitable material losses.

Examples of skewers as tactical devices in their purest form are rarely seen in the middle game, simply because there are so many intervening factors. So we shall consider first a simple skewer in an endgame setting:

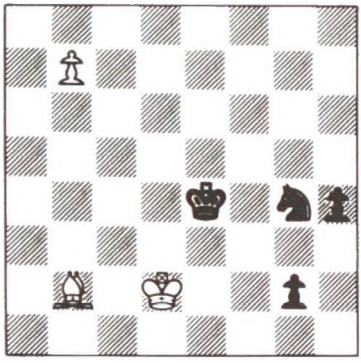


Diagram 59
Study by P. Stamma
1737

This study by Stamma shows a situation with both players on the verge of promotion; White forces the win with the use of a tactical resource—the skewer. 1 Bd4! this temporarily prevents the black g-pawn from queening and invites the black king to occupy a square on the g1–a7 diagonal 1 . . . Kxd4 2 b8=Q g1=Q 3 Qb6+ and the black queen is lost.

As one might expect it is unusual to have skewers against the king in the middle game (since he is normally tucked safely in the corner) and it is the queen who is often the target for such tricks as our next example illustrates:

Diagram 60
Geller–Sveshnikov
46th USSR Championship 1978

A complicated position has been reached where White has the material advantage of rook for bishop ('the exchange'), but his king is very exposed and the two white rooks are being forked. Play continued—32 Rb1 (White solves the problem by pinning the bishop to Black's undefended rook on b8) 32 . . . Re8 (Black threatens the white queen and renews the threat of Bxa2) 33 Rxa5 (33 Rxb3? fails to 33 . . . Rxe4 34 Rb8+ Re8 −+; the move played is a deflection sacrifice which obviously cannot be accepted) 33 . . . d5 34 Re1?? (this 'self-skewer' is a fatal error, the correct defence was 34 Qxe8+ Qxe8 35 Rxb3 Qg6+ 36 Kf1 Qd3+ 37 Kg2 Qg6+ =) 34 . . . Qg6+! 35 resigns. The check is decisive, e.g. 35 Qxg6 Rxe1+ 36 Kg2 hxg6 providing a flight square for the black king, and emerging with an extra piece. This example amusingly (although not for Geller) incorporated a fork, pin and skewer, and it was the last which eventually decided the issue.

3. The Fork

The fork is perhaps the most well-known tactical device on the chess-board. It simply means a simultaneous attack on two or more of the opponent's pieces by a single piece. For this reason any piece is capable of forking, but the knight fork is definitely the most common.

Our first example illustrates a pawn fork; consider the following variation in the Berlin–Classical defence to the Ruy Lopez: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 Bc5 4 O–O Nf6 5 Nxe5!:

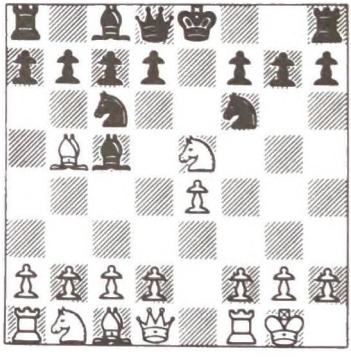


Diagram 61
Ruy Lopez
Berlin-Classical
Variation

This 'pseudo-sacrifice' is considered very strong in this position, so much so that Black normally declines the piece and plays 5 . . . Nxe4

leading to interesting complications. However, we shall examine the line continuing with 5 . . . Nxe5 6 d4. This pawn fork regains the piece and ensures White the initiative, e.g. 6 . . . Bd6 7 f4! Ng6 8 e5 Be7 9 f5!± White will snare one of the knights and in the meantime he has gained a clear spatial advantage.

Korchnoi provides us with a nice example of a queen fork and a knight fork in the following important theoretical game:

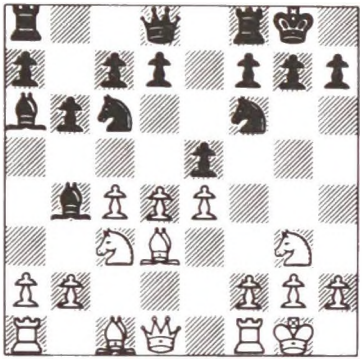


Diagram 62
Lombard–Korchnoi
Switzerland
1978

In this position in the Rubenstein variation of the Nimzo–Indian, Korchnoi comes up with a move which was previously condemned by 'theory'—9 . . . Nxd4!! 10 Qa4 (this is the reason why Korchnoi's move was thought unplayable: the white queen is forking the two black bishops, and 10 . . . Ba5 11 b4 is clearly no good, so Black's reply seems forced) 10 . . . Bxc3 11bxc3. Now both the black bishop and the knight on d4 are attacked and it seems as if Black must lose a piece, but Korchnoi has seen a stage further 11 . . . Ne6! (This move solves most of Black's problems, he saves his knight and is able to answer 12 Qxa6 with 12 . . . Nc5 forking White's queen and bishop on d3, thereby regaining his piece and remaining a pawn to the good.) 12 Ba3—this is the only attempt for White to gain the initiative, but even this doesn't prove adequate 12 . . . Bb7 (obviously not 12 . . . Re8 or 12 . . . d6 when White does win a piece with 13 Qxa6 since 13 . . . Nc5 is met by 14 Bxc5) 13 Bxf8 Qxf8 White has won the exchange but Black's extra pawn and superior pawn structure are more than enough compensation, and it did not take Korchnoi long to win White's doubled c-pawns and then the game.

Our next example shows a forcing sequence of moves which bring the black king and queen into 'relationship':

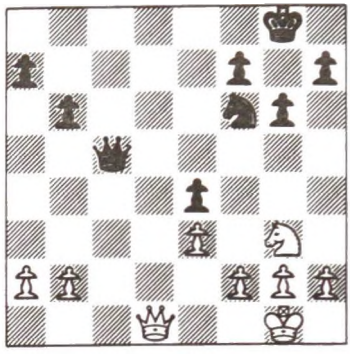


Diagram 63
M. Euwe–J. Davidson
Holland
1925

Euwe played 1 Qd8+ Kg7 2 Qxf6+! Kxf6 3 Nxe4+ Ke5 4 Nxc5 bxc5 giving him an extra pawn in an easily won king and pawn endgame.

Another more complicated example of the same theme was seen in the game Zukertort–Englisch played in London in 1883:

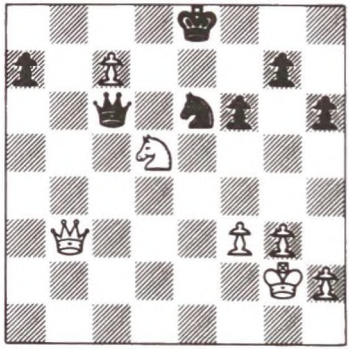


Diagram 64
J. H. Zukertort–B. Englisch London
1883

Zukertort starts off with a very ingenious queen sacrifice—1 Qb5!! Qxb5 (forced in view of 1 . . . Kd7? and 1 . . . Nd4 both being answered by 2 c8=Q+ winning) 2 c8=Q+ Kf7 (2 . . . Nd8 3 Nc7+ +−) 3 Qxe6+! Kxe6 4 Nc7+ this knight fork decides the game.

Our final example in this section shows a series of sacrifices leading to a deadly knight fork:

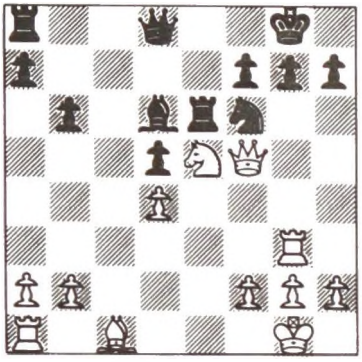


Diagram 65
Povah–Granat
London
1979

One more move was all that was necessary to win this game 18 Rxg7+! resigns. The continuation would have been 18 . . . Kxg7 19 Bh6+!! Kxh6 (obviously 19 . . . Kh8 20 Nxf7+ and 19 . . . Kg8 20 Qg5+ are no better) 20 Nxf7+ (the decisive knight fork) Kg7 21 Nxd8 Re8 (21 . . . Rxd8 22 Qxe6 +−) 22 Qg5+ when White gains a clear material advantage.

4. Discovered checks

A discovered check is a truly deadly weapon because there is a lot to be said for the anonymous quote in Kotov's excellent book *Think like a Grandmaster*—'When I give check I am afraid of nobody!'

As the enemy king rarely walks voluntarily into the firing line of a discovered check, he needs to be enticed by sacrificial bait. The next example illustrates this point very forcibly:

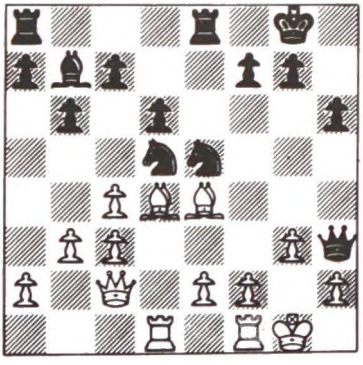


Diagram 66
G. W. Wheeler–Povah
London
1977

If White continues 18 cxd5 (18 Bxd5 Ng4 19 Rfe1 Qxh2+ 20 Kf1 Bxd5 wins for Black) 18 . . . Ng4 19 Rfe1 Qxh2+ 20 Kf1 then Black has regained his pawn with the better prospects. So White decides to expel the black queen before capturing on d5. He should have preferred the above line, for the game concluded 18 Bg2?? when Black was able to close proceedings with 18 . . . Qxg2+! 19 resigns. White's forced reply 19 Kxg2 would have been answered by the double discovered check 19 . . . Nf4+ followed by 20 Kg1 Nh3 mate.

Another example of such a drastic finish was seen in the following encounter:

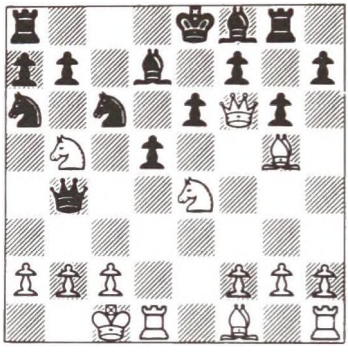


Diagram 67
Haldane–Clegg
London
1978

White came up with the stunning 15 Qd8+!! and Black resigned! It's mate in four!—15 . . . Rxd8 (15 . . . Nxd8 comes to the same) 16 Nf6+ (the queen sacrifice was necessary on two counts—first to vacate the f6 square, and second to cause an obstruction on d8) 16 . . . Ke7 17 Nxd5+—this double discovered check is decisive—17 . . . Ke8 18 Nbc7+ Nxc7 19 Nxc7 mate. And this time a miniature from two of 'the greats':

R. Réti–Dr Tartakover
1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 Nxe4 Nf6 5 Qd3 (it is more natural to capture on f6 when Black can consider either pawn recapture. Tartakover now tries to refute White's play. 5 . . . Nxe4 intending . . . Nd7 and . . . Nf6 was wiser) 5 . . . e5? 6 dxe5 Qa5+ 7 Bd2 Qxe5 8 O–O–O! White breaks the pin on the e-file and sets a deadly trap which with 8 . . . Nxe5?? Black falls into (8 . . . Be7 was advisable):

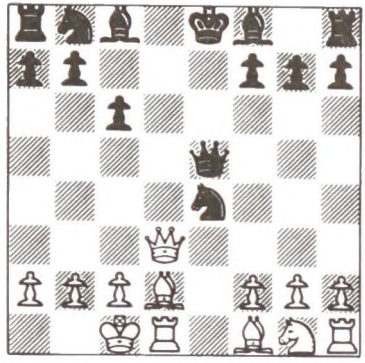


Diagram 68
R. Réti–Dr Tartakover

Réti now punishes Tartakover for both his greed and lack of development with 9 Qd8+!! Kxd8 10 Bg5+—it's double check, which always must be answered with a king move. 10 . . . Kc7 (10 . . . Ke8 11 Rd8 is also mate) 11 Bd8 mate. A beautiful finish.

In case the reader thinks all discovered checks are either double checks, or end in mate, we give the following very instructive example:

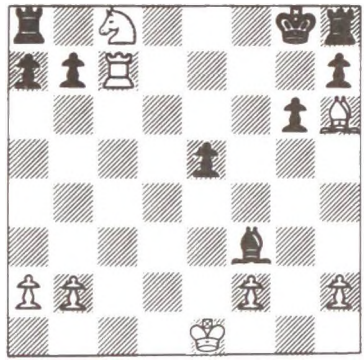


Diagram 69
A. Kupferstich–J. Andreassen Denmark 1953

White is the exchange and a pawn down, but his pieces are so active (especially compared to Black's) that he is capable of producing a superb finale. Play continued—29 Rg7+ Kf8 30 Rxb7+ Kg8 (naturally not 30 . . . Ke8 allowing 31 Nd6+ Kd8 32 Bg5 mate) 31 Rg7+ Kf8. The black king is caught in a series of discovered checks amusingly known as a 'see-saw'—the white rook could happily demolish

the whole of the second rank if he so desired. As Nimzovich stated, 'the see-saw can be the cause of frightful devastation'. 32 Rxa7 + Kg8; unfortunately for White the black rook on a8 is guarded by the bishop on f3, so how is he going to convert his positional superiority? Perhaps the reader would like to study this position, for White's winning process is an amazing conception: see if you can find it!

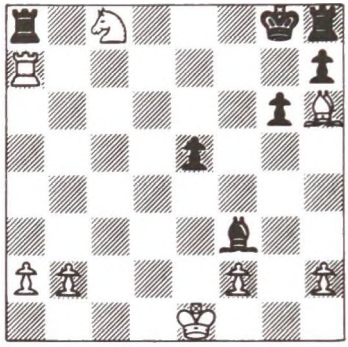


Diagram 70
Kupferstich–Andreassen
After 32 . . . Kg8

Kupferstich amazingly exchanged off his active rook. 33 Rxa8 Bxa8 and continued 34 Nd6! when Black resigned!! A close examination of the position reveals that Black is helpless against the following mating sequence: 34 . . . g5—this is as good as anything else since White's knight and bishop have the black king completely incarcerated—35 Kd2 Bd5 this bishop is worse than useless, because without it Black might have some hope of stalemating himself. 36 Kc3 Bxa2 37 Kb4 g4 38 Kc5 e4 39 Kc6 White is not interested in Black's pawns since he is after bigger game—the black king!—39 . . . Be6 40 Kc7 g3—trying for stalemate possibilities—41 hxg3 e3 42 fxe3 Bd7 43 Kd8 Be6 44 Ke7 Bf5 (44 . . . Bd7 45 Ne4 and Nf6 mate) 45 Ne8 followed by 46 Nf6 mate. Unfortunately for Black he could never force White to capture his bishop. Surely one of the most unusual conclusions ever seen on the chess-board!

5. Overloading

Overloading is a concept which can often bring about the downfall of a player's position. By allowing one or more of his pieces to become 'overworked' a player provides his opponent with the opportunity to exploit the lack of mobility and flexibility that results in the co-ordination of his forces.

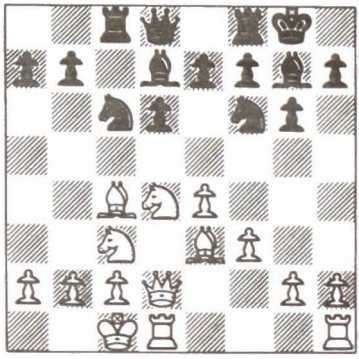


Diagram 71
Sicilian Dragon
Yugoslav Variation
After 10 . . . Rc8

The position shown in Diagram 71 is standard in the Yugoslav variation of the Sicilian Dragon. White normally takes heed of Black's threats on the c-file with 11 Bb3, but what if he were to initiate an immediate king-side advance with 11 h4? The answer is a simple tactical refutation 11 . . . Nxd4—this discovers an attack on the bishop on c4 (i.e. opens the c-file), thus forcing White's reply 12 Qxd4. The white queen is now lined up with the 'Dragon' bishop allowing the powerful discovery 12 . . . Ng4! 13 Qd3. Now we see that the white queen is 'overworked' since she is protecting two pieces and is easily deflected away from one of them 13 . . . Nxe3 14 Qxe3 Rxc4 with a simple win.

Our next example shows a queen being overworked, having to defend two key squares:

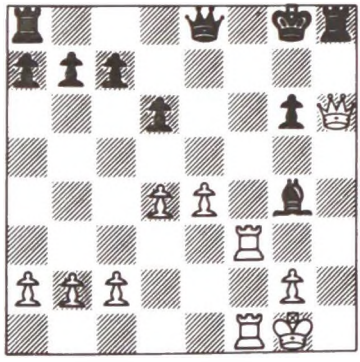


Diagram 72
P. Morphy–T. Worrall
New Orleans
1857

The tactically brilliant Paul Morphy had no trouble in taking advantage of the overtaxed black queen with the following straightforward

sequence 1 Rf8+ Qxf8 2 Rxf8+ Rxf8 3 Qxg6 mate. Basically the queen was deflected from her defensive duty towards the g6 square. The idea of deflecting a piece from its defensive duties is a well-known one, and the famous problem and study composer A. Troitsky produced the following example:

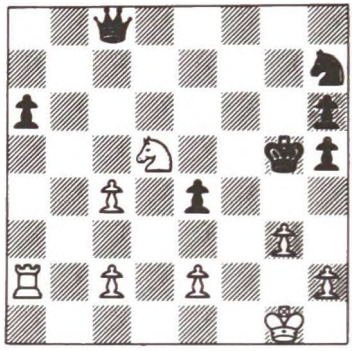


Diagram 73
Study by A. Troitsky
1898

First White draws the black king into a mating net as follows 1 h4+ Kg4 (obviously not 1 . . . Kf5 or 1 . . . Kg6 which both lose to 2 Ne7+) 2 Kg2 Qc5 (forced in order to stop the threat of . . . Ne3 mate) 3 Ra5! White starts harassing the black queen who must keep an eye on the e3 square 3 . . . Qa7 4 Rxa6 Qc5 5 Ra5 Qd4 6 c3 Qd2 7 Ra2 Qc1 8 Rc2 finally, the black queen has been hunted to death and must desert her defence of e3, so White wins.

Our final example in this section is, in the author's opinion, one of the most brilliant combinations ever seen:

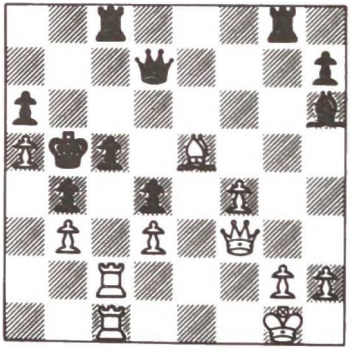


Diagram 74
Dr S. Tarrasch–3
Amateurs Naples
1914

Tarrasch as White has an extra pawn and dangerous attacking prospects against the black king. At the moment Black appears to have adequate defences to White's threats of Qb7+ and Rxc5+: see if you can find the amazing move played by Tarrasch. The point of this position is that Black's defences to the key squares b7 and c5 intersect at the c7 square. Tarrasch played the beautiful 31 Bc7!! whereupon Black resigned. This fabulous move illustrates the famous Plachutta interference theme, well known to problemists. Black is powerless to meet White's dual threats, e.g. 31 . . . Rxc7 is refuted by 32 Qb7+! (deflecting the black rook since 32 . . . Kxa5 33 Ra1 leads to mate next move) 32 . . . Rxb7 33 Rxc5 mate, and 31 . . . Qxc7 32 Rxc5+ (again deflecting the key defender) Qxc5 33 Qb7+ with mate next move. Tarrasch's brilliant bishop sacrifice caused one of the two black defenders to become overworked, while the other became obsolete. This combination must rank as one of the most impressive displays of an interference theme combining with a deflection theme to deliver mate.

'Chess is 99 per cent tactics'—Richard Teichmann

We round off this chapter with an examination of further tactical motifs paying particular attention to the sacrifice. As the reader has probably come to realize, there are few examples of a pure tactical theme in the middle game, since most combinations are contaminated by the interaction of several basic tactical principles.

Our next example basically utilizes a potentially deadly knight fork:

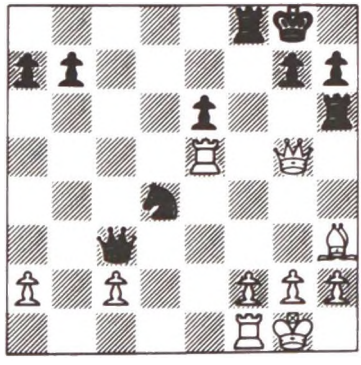


Diagram 75
S. Levitzky–F. J. Marshall
Breslau
1912

Marshall has very active pieces and he quickly capitalizes on this fact with the rather obvious 1 . . . Rxh3: the rook is immune from

capture, because the white g-pawn is needed to guard the f3 square, which is very attractive to Black's knight. Levitzky tries to confuse the issue with 2 Rc5 attacking the black queen, but now Marshall comes up with a truly amazing move which forces immediate resignation. What did Marshall play? See if you can spot the star move.

The answer to the position is quite simply to move the black queen to a square where she is seemingly in even greater danger, namely 2 . . . Qg3!! The threat of mate on h2 forces one of the three captures, all of which lose: first 3 fxg3 loses to 3 . . . Ne2+ 4 Kh1 Rxf1 mate, and 3 hxg3 Ne2 is mate; finally 3 Qxg3 Ne2+ 4 Kh1 Nxg3+ 5 Kg1 leaves Black with a clear material advantage in the ending.

One could argue whether the last example employed any sacrifices at all, since if even the sacrifices were accepted, mate or material gain would result. Therefore it is convenient to group sacrificial combinations into two categories:

1. the Pseudo-sacrifice
2. the Speculative-sacrifice.

Sacrifices are basically tactical by definition, but the consequences can vary from a forced mating sequence at one extreme to long-term positional difficulties on the other extreme.

1. The Pseudo-sacrifice

By 'pseudo-sacrifice' we mean the type of sacrificial combination where the consequences can be clearly analysed to a satisfactory conclusion, such as a forced mate or gain of material. Chess literature is littered with countless examples of sacrifices denuding an enemy king who is rapidly slaughtered.

That masterful tactician Tarrasch provides us with a typical example:

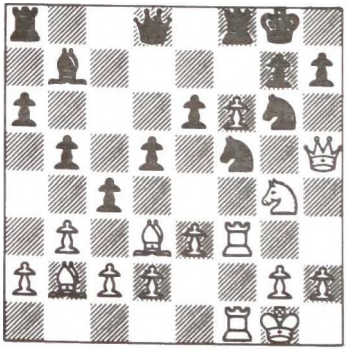


Diagram 76
Dr S. Tarrasch–Satzinger
Munich
1915

The game continued—18 fxg7 Nxg7 and now with so many white pieces pointing towards the hapless black king it should come as no surprise to find that White has a killing combination. Tarrasch played 19 Qxh7+!! Kxh7 20 Rh3+ Kg8 (20 . . . Nh5 21 Rxh5+ Kg8 22 Rh8 +! Nxh8 23 Nh6 mate) 21 Nh6+ Kh8 22 Nf7 + Kg8 23 Rh8 +! Nxh8 24 Nh6 mate! Tarrasch is to be commended for finding this beautiful variation in a position where many players would have settled for a more mundane win with a move such as 19 Bxg6, etc.

The next example is somewhat similar in that the enemy monarch is exposed but, unlike the previous example where White could hardly fail to win, this time the consequences of the sacrifice could not be readily calculated, although the result was never really in doubt—only the method of extermination needed to be found.

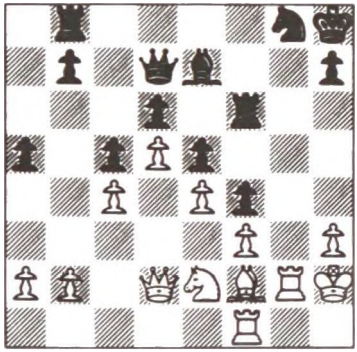


Diagram 77
Y. Averbakh–A. Kotov
Zurich Candidates' Tournament
1953

This battle, between two of Russia's leading Grandmasters of the day, was developing into a heavy positional struggle with White intending to attack down the open g-file and Black poised to open the queen side with a timely . . . b5. But it was here that Kotov had a flash of inspiration which led to what may be referred to as an 'instinctive' or 'intuitive' sacrifice. Kotov played the highly imaginative 30 . . . Qxh3+!! 31 Kxh3 Rh6+ 32 Kg4 Nf6+ 33 Kf5—White's king has been drawn into the jaws of death but strangely enough Black has no immediate forced win. Fortunately for Kotov, White's pieces are passively placed behind a wall of pawns, and can only watch the annihilation of their monarch from afar. 33 . . . Nd7 (Stahlberg later suggested 33 . . . Ng4 as being even stronger, but 34 Nxf4 Rf8+ 35 Kxg4 Rg8+ 36 Ng6+ keeps White kicking for a while) 34 Rg5 staves off the threatened mate . . . Rf8, . . . Rg8 and . . . Rf6,

and we can be quite sure that Kotov was not able to analyse all the consequences of his brilliant queen sacrifice, but his instinct must have told him that the day of reckoning would not be far away. 34 . . . Rf8+ 35 Kg4 Nf6+ 36 Kf5 Ng8+ 37 Kg4 Nf6+ Black is trying to reach the time control at move 40. 38 Kf5 Nxd5+ 39 Kg4 Nf6+. By capturing the pawn on d5 Kotov has avoided a three-fold repetition of position and can safely make the time control without having to play a committal move—very good technique! 40 Kf5 Ng8+ 41 Kg4 Nf6+ 42 Kf5 Ng8 + 43 Kg4 Bxg5 44 Kxg5 Rf7 (threatening mate in two with . . . Rg7+ and . . . Rf6 mate) 45 Bh4 (45 Nxf4 was no good either 45 . . . Rg7+ 46 Ng6+ Rgxg6+ 47 Kf5 Ne7 mate) 45 . . . Rg6+ 46 Kh5 Rfg7 47 Bg5 Rxg5+ 48 Kh4 Nf6 49 Ng3 Rxg3 50 Qxd6 R3g6 51 Qb8+ Rg8 52 resigns. A delightful victory for intuition!

2. The Speculative-sacrifice

Our first example is taken from one of the author's games in which he had the opportunity to play an exchange sacrifice which denuded the enemy king thereby offering long-term attacking prospects:

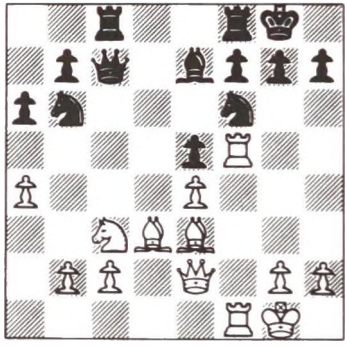


Diagram 78
N. Povah–S. Aarseth
National Plate Tournament 1976

Black played the rather provocative 16 . . . Bc5?! and White had no hesitation in playing 17 Rxf6 gxf6. Black's king is very vulnerable now and his defence will prove difficult; White must avoid too many exchanges, which explains his next move 18 Kh1! It is not easy to follow up a sacrifice with a 'quiet' move like this, but it was quite necessary as will be seen. 18 . . . Bxe3 19 Qxe3 (now we see the point of White's king move, for if the king were still on g1 Black could exchange queens with 19 . . . Qc5) 19 . . . Qd6? (Black has a very difficult defensive task particularly on the dark squares round his

king. Relatively best was 19 . . . Kh8 20 Rxf6 Nd7 21 Nd5 Qd8 22 Qh6! with powerful threats of Rd6, Rxd7 and Nf6 or simply Rf5 and Rh5) 20 Qh6 + – Kh8 (If 20 . . . Rc6 then 21 Rf3 is decisive, e.g. 21 . . . f5 22 Rg3+ Qg6 23 Rxg6 + –) 21 Rxf6 (21 Rf3 Rg8 22 Rh3 Rg7 allows Black to defend) 21 . . . Qd4 (if 21 . . . Qc5 22 Qh3! intending Rh6, etc.) 22 Rxb6 White now has a material advantage as well as his overwhelming positional superiority 22 . . . Rg8 23 Qf6+ Rg7 24 Rxb7 Kg8 25 h3 (not 25 Nd5? allowing 25 . . . Qxd3! with unnecessary complications) Qe3 26 Nd5 Qg3 27 Bf1 resigns.

This sacrifice was speculative in that the author was not able to foresee that he would regain his material in such a forceful fashion, and his seventeenth move was based more upon judgement than calculation. It is true that Kotov's queen sacrifice in the previous section might also fall into this category, especially when one considers that his sacrificial investment (queen for pawn) was much higher, but the extremely exposed state of Averbakh's king made his chances of survival highly unlikely.

Now we turn to perhaps the 'king' of the speculative-sacrifice—Mikhail Tal. Tal's games are abundant with weird and wonderful sacrifices of which the consequences are far from clear. Our first example is from the World Championship candidates' semi-final, Bled, 1965:

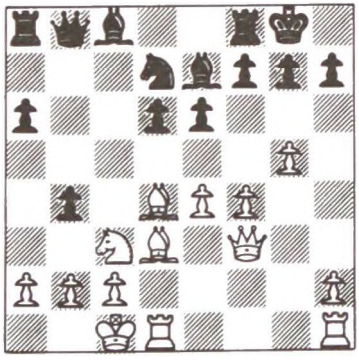


Diagram 79
Tal–Larsen
World Championship
Candidates
Bled
1965

A sharp battle has ensued so far, but now Tal plays a well-known sacrifice in a somewhat different setting 16 Nd5!! This sacrifice is usually seen in positions where the black king is still in the centre and White has a rook on e1 to exploit the open e-file after 16 . . . exd5 17 exd5. This is a truly speculative sacrifice because for his

piece White has only one pawn and two open lines namely the b1–h7 diagonal and the e-file. It is true that White has some tangible threats such as 18 Qe4, but surely Larsen should be able to defend? 17 . . . f5?! (Well, if there is a defence, then this is the critical juncture. First, it should be noted that 17 . . . Re8 and 17 . . . Bd8 both fail to the classic double bishop sacrifice 18 Bxh7+! Kxh7 19 Qh5+ Kg8 20 Bxg7!! Kxg7 21 Qh6+ Kg8 22 g6 with a mating attack. General opinion suggests 17 . . . g6 was the best defence, and Larsen even went as far as to say that this was the refutation of Tal's attack. Such is the way with speculative-sacrifices, however, that we cannot be sure that Larsen would have been able to defend this position, given that the defence is tricky and he was running short of time—factors which Tal frequently exploits!) 18 Rde1 Rf7 (Tal gave the following line after the game 18 . . . Bd8 19 Qh5 Nc5 20 Bxg7! Nxd3+ 21 Kb1! Nxe1 22 g6 Kxg7 23 Qxh7+ Kf6 24 g7 Rf7? 25 g8 =N mate. Such is Tal's power of calculation and imagination that he gets to play and analyse more sacrifices in one game than many players do in a lifetime!) 19 h4 Bb7 20 Bxf5! (this pseudo-sacrifice proves very strong, but 20 g6 hxg6 followed by 21 h5 opening the king side was also promising) 20 . . . Rxf5 21 Rxe7 Ne5! (Enterprising defence: if instead 21 . . . Rf7 then 22 Rxf7 Kxf7 23 g6+! hxg6 24 h5! gives White a deadly attack.) 22 Qe4 Qf8 23 fxe5 Rf4 24 Qe3 Rf3 25 Qe2 Qxe7 26 Qxf3 dxe5 27 Re1 Rd8 28 Rxe5 Qd6 29 Qf4! (with the threat of 30 Re8+ so Tal maintains his two pawn advantage and positional superiority) 29 . . . Rf8 30 Qe4 b3 31 axb3 Rf1+ 32 Kd2 Qb4+ 33 c3 Qd6 34 Bc5! (the final decisive sacrifice, deflecting the black queen away from her defence of the e6 square) 34 . . . Qxc5 35 Re8+ Rf8 36 Qe6+ Kh8 37 Qf7 resigns.

Finally we give a complete game illustrating Tal's ability to make speculative material sacrifices:

Tal–Vooremaa, Tallinn, 1971
1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 a6 5 Bd3 Nc6 6 Be3 (6 Nxc6 is the alternative) 6 . . . Nf6 7 O–O Qc7 8 Nc3 Bd6?! 9 Kh1! (defending the h-pawn without weakening his king side 9 . . . Bxh2! would lose the bishop to 10 Nxc6 and 11 f4, etc.) 9 . . . h5? Vooremaa is intent upon initiating his king-side attack. 10 f4 Ng4 11 Qf3 Nxe3 12 Qxe3 Qb6 13 Nce2 (Black has the two bishops, but his light-squared bishop cannot be developed for the moment and his king is still in the centre. Furthermore Tal threatens to expand with e5

and perhaps f5, so Black takes preventive measures.) 13 . . . e5 14 Qg3!

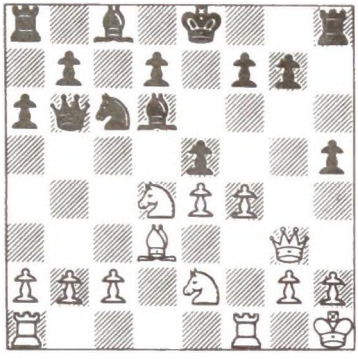


Diagram 80
Tal–Vooremaa
Tallinn
1971
After 14 Qg3!

(A typical Tal speculative sacrifice which avoids the simplification of 14 Nf5 Qxe3 15 Nxe3 exf4 16 Nxf4 Bxf4. It is unlikely that Tal could have calculated all the consequences of his piece sacrifice, but his judgement must have told him that Black's defensive task would not be easy.) 14 . . . exd4 15 Qxg7 Rf8 16 e5 (So for his sacrificed piece Tal has one pawn, the more active pieces and a dominant pawn centre.) 16 . . . Be7 17 f5 f6 (Vooremaa rightly fears 18 f6 which would give him an even more cramped position, but since no immediate win is in sight it was probably preferable to try to unravel his queen side rather than further the weakening of the king side) 18 Nf4! Rf7 (18 . . . fxe5 allows 19 f6, while 18 . . . Nxe5 is met by 19 Qxe7+ Kxe7 20 Nd5+, etc.):

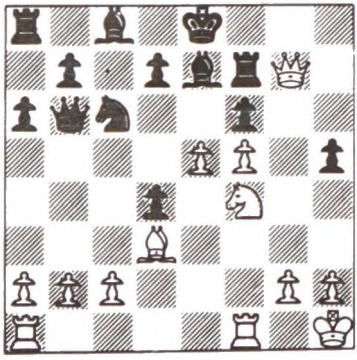


Diagram 81
Tal–Vooremaa
After 18 . . . Rf7

Tal now produces one of those sparkling queen sacrifices which is so common in his play. 19 exf6!! Ne5 (Black declines, for 19 . . . Rxg7 20 fxg7 Kf7 21 Nxh5! threatening both 22 f6 or 22 Bc4+ is too unbearable. Tal produces yet another surprise, but not the last!) 20 Bc4!! The queen still hangs, and now the bishop is offered. 20 . . . Nxc4 21 Qg8+ Bf8 (If 21 . . . Rf8 then 22 Qxc4 regains one of the pieces and leaves Black in difficulties due to the threats of Nd5–c7 and Rae1+, etc. The move played is little better, because despite Black's two extra pieces his king is a sitting target on the open e-file.) 22 Nxh5 Nd6 (White threatened 23 Rae1+) 23 Rae1+ Kd8 24 Re7! Qb5! (Vooremaa takes the opportunity to threaten mate himself. 24 . . . Rxe7 would lead to mate thus 25 fxe7+ Kxe7 26 Qg5+ Kf7 27 Qf6+ Kg8 28 Qg6+ Kh8 29 Nf6, etc.) 25 Rfe1 Qd5?? (Gufeld suggested 25 . . . Qa5 26 Ra1! after the game, but it is the difficulty of the defence that is the hallmark of the speculative-sacrifice.) 26 Nf4 Qxa2 27 Ne6+!! (The final surprise—Tal sacrifices a third piece in order to mop up Black's unco-ordinated king-side forces. 27 . . . dxe6 would allow 28 Rxf7 Nxf7 29 Qxf8+ Kc8 30 Qxf7+ Kb6 31 fxe6 with an easy win.) 27 . . . Qxe6 28 fxe6 Rxf6 29 Rf7 resigns. All resistance is crushed after 29 . . . Nxf7 30 exf7+, etc.

6 More Complex Endings

In Chapter 1 we considered basic endings; now, having covered certain aspects of the opening and middle game, we are ready to take a more detailed look at the endgame. It should be emphasized that this book cannot possibly compete with the many specialist books on the endgame, which the reader is advised to consult. Our objective here is to make the student aware of some important practical issues which can often arise in the endgame.

FURTHER KING AND PAWN ENDINGS

Although king and pawn endings are considered as being the easiest to play, it is important that they are played with great care, for one slip can often prove to be fatal. Consider the following example:

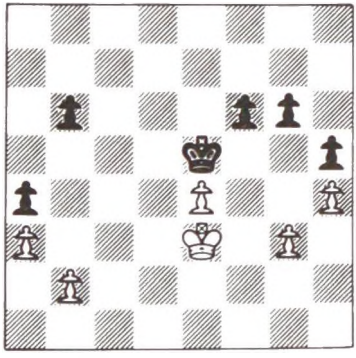


Diagram 82
Ree–Ftacnik
Kiev
1978

An examination of the diagrammed position reveals that Black stands better; he has the white king tied down to the defence of the

weak e-pawn and he has an extra tempo on the queen side with the pawn move . . . b5 if he should ever need it. Ftacnik thought his advantage was so clear that he made the common error of underestimating his opponent's counter chances. His choice is between 56 . . . f5 and 56 . . . g5, one move, although drawing, offers some winning chances while the other loses, so which move should he play? Do not read any further until you have made a thorough investigation of the position and chosen what you believe to be a correct and safe course of action.

Complacency in chess can be a real killer and Ftacnik was guilty of just this because he played the fatal blunder 56 . . . g5? He hopes to be able to play 57 . . . gxh4 58 gxh4 f5 59 exf5 Kxf5 60 Kf3 when the tempo move 60 . . . b5 places White in zugzwang since he must lose his h-pawn and consequently the game. Unfortunately, however, Ree now found a single move which completely destroys Black's game 57 g4!!—White wins in every variation as follows:

(a) 57 . . . gxh4 58 gxh5 h3 59 Kf2 Ke6 (59 . . . f5. 60 h6 Kf6 61 exf5 is decisive) 60 Kg3 Kf7 61 Kxh3 Kg7 62 Kg3 Kh6 63 Kf4 Kxh5 64 Kf5 with an easy win.

(b) 57 . . . hxg4 58 h5 the point! The h-pawn is now passed. 58 . . . Ke6 (58 . . . f5 59 h6 f4+ 60 Kf2 g3+ 61 Kg2 Kf6 62 e5+! Kg6 63 e6—White's two passed pawns are much more powerful than Black's 3!) 59 Kf2 Kf7 60 Kg3 Kg7 61 Kxg4 Kh6 62 Kf5 Kxh5 63 Kxf6 g4 64 e5 g3 65 e6 g2 66 e7 g1=Q Black queens first but to no avail. 67 e8=Q+ Kh4 68 Qh8+ Kg3 69 Qg7+ Kf2 70 Qxg1+ Kxg1.

This long forcing variation was in fact the game continuation, and Ree was now able to win the race to the queen side 71 Ke5 Kf2 72 Kd5 Ke3 73 Kc6 (not 73 Kc4? Kd2 74 Kb4 Kc2 75 Kxa4 Kxb2 drawn) 73 . . . Kd2 74 Kxb6 Kc2 75 Ka5 Kxb2 76 Kxa4 White wins by one tempo! 76 . . . Kc3 77 Kb5 resigns. The a-pawn reincarnates.

The safer try was 56 . . . f5 when White would have drawn, if he was careful!

Now that the reader has been warned about some of the dangers in king and pawn endings, we will consider some special cases.

In Diagram 83 we see a common—3 versus 3—situation where White can win by the use of a well-known resource:

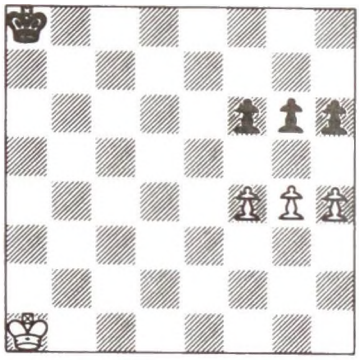


Diagram 83

White plays 1 g5! and answers 1 . . . fxg5 with 2 h5! gxh5 (2 . . . gxf4 3 hxg6 f3 4 g7 f2 5 g8=Q+ +−) 3 f5 and White queens first. On 1 . . . hxg5 the reply is 2 f5! with the same consequences.

A similar 'trick' was seen in a game—

Pomar–Kuadras, Olot, 1974:

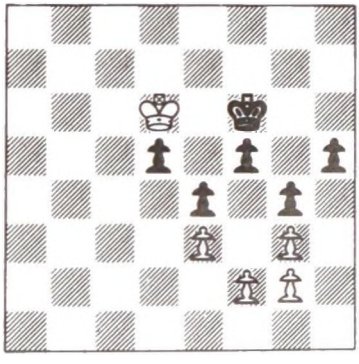


Diagram 84
Pomar–Kuadras
Olot
1974

Black played 63 . . . f4! 64 Kxd5 (the alternatives were no better, e.g. 64 exf4 h4! when 65 Kxd5 loses to 65 . . . h3 and 65 gxh4 g3! 66 fxg3 e3 −+ Naturally 64 . . . d4 would also win, but the above variation is more attractive. The other alternative 64 gxf4 loses to 64 . . . h4 65 Kxd5 h3) 64 . . . h4! Black is determined to break through at any cost. 65 Kxe4 (65 gxh4 loses to the familiar resource 65 . . . g3 66 fxg3 fxe3 −+, while the other captures allow 65 . . . h3 winning) 65 . . . f3! 66 gxf3 h3 and the h-pawn decides the game. A very instructive

example of a well-known theme. It was knowledge of position 83 which presumably enabled Kuadras to engineer his clever breakthrough. From this the reader should see the importance of studying basic themes.

We now turn to an interesting example which illustrates the mighty power of zugzwang in king and pawn endings:

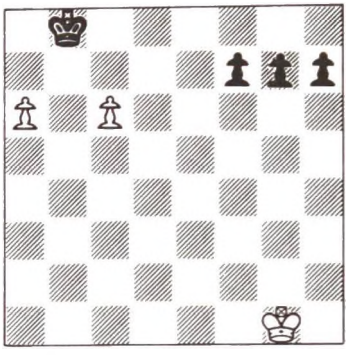


Diagram 85

This position can be considered in two parts. First on the left-hand side of the diagram we have a rare case of 'mutual zugzwang' where the first player to move loses! If White moves either pawn then he loses them both, while if Black moves his king then one of the white pawns queens, e.g. 1 . . . Kc7 2 a7 or 1 . . . Ka7 2 c7. Therefore we are able to deduce that the real battle rages on the right-hand side of the board where each player will be trying to restrain the other so as to place him in zugzwang. So the question arises—'can a lone king cope with three connected passed pawns?' Well the answer is dependent on the positions of the king and pawns: the further advanced the pawns the better their chances. Hence the diagram position is an easy win for White, no matter whose move, e.g. 1 . . . f5 2 Kg2 h5 3 Kg3 g6 (3 . . . g5 4 Kg2! reaches the position of move 8—one rank back) 4 Kg2! g5 (4 . . . f4 5 Kf3 g5 6 Kf2 g4 7 Kg2 f3+ 8 Kg3 h4+ 9 Kf2! h3 10 Kg3 and Black is in decisive zugzwang) 5 Kg1 g4 6 Kg2 h4 7 Kh2 f4 8 Kg1! One of the basic winning positions 8 . . . f3 (8 . . . g3 9 Kg2 + −) 9 Kf2 h3 10 Kg3 + − when the black pawns move they are captured, e.g. 10 . . . f2 11 Kxf2 h2 12 Kg2 g3 13 Kh1! g2+ 14 Kxh2 g1=Q+ 15 Kxg1 and now Black must move his king.

We rely on Troitsky again to provide us with a game-like position which utilizes the above theme:

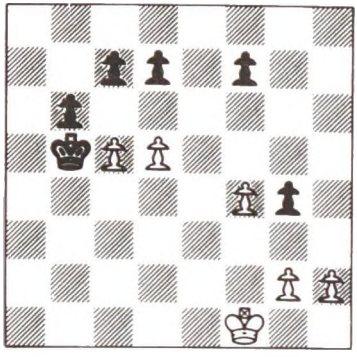


Diagram 86
Troitsky
1924

White's winning chances lie in his potential passed pawn on the h-file, but the winning procedure is quite subtle: 1 c6! (not 1 h4? gxh3 e.p. 2 gxh3 Kxc5 3 h4 Kd6! 4 h5 Ke7 5 h6 Kf8 wins, but not 5 . . . Kf6? 6 f5! when the zugzwang factor rears its ugly head again) 1 . . . dxc6 2 d6! This clever pawn sacrifice blocks the black king route to f8 via Kc5–d6–e7–f8. 2 . . . cxd6 3 h4 gxh3 e.p. 4 gxh3 Kc5 5 h4 Kd5 6 h5 Ke6. The black king must stay in the 'square' (see page 24) 7 h6 Kf6 8 f5!

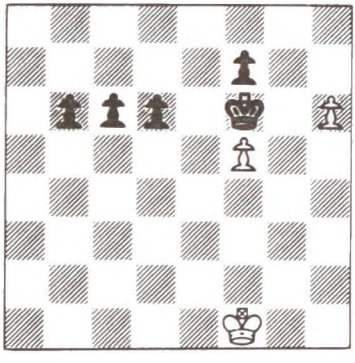


Diagram 87

We now have the basic position akin to that of Diagram 85, Black cannot move his king as the h-pawn queens, therefore White wins as follows—8 . . . b5! 9 Ke2 b4 10 Kd3 d5 11 Kc2! (not 11 Kd4? c5+ 12 Kd3 b3! wins) 11 . . . d4 12 Kc1! c5 13 Kc2! c4 14 Kc1! when White has achieved the standard winning position.

In Chapter 1 we mentioned the 'opposition', a well-known principle in king and pawn endings. Now we shall take the principle one stage further by citing a short example of the 'distant opposition'.

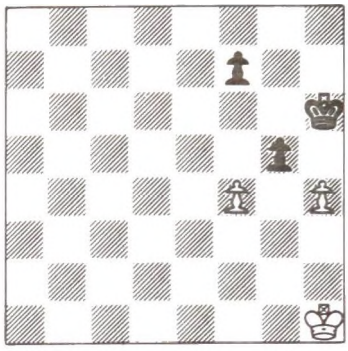


Diagram 88
Mattison
1918

The problem is White to play and draw. The reader might like to tackle this one before reading on. Although White will capture Black's g-pawn, the black king is actively placed to win both white pawns. However White has one variation which draws—1 hxg5+ (not 1 fxg5+? Kh5 2 Kg2 Kxh4 3 g6 fxg6 with a simple win) 1 . . . Kh5 2 g6! fxg6 (2 . . . Kxg6 3 Kg2 Kf5 4 Kf3 draws easily) 3 f5! gxf5 White's pawn sacrifices have succeeded in bringing Black's remaining pawn alongside his king, and now it is difficult for Black to follow the maxim 'King in front of the pawn' 4 Kg1! (the only move ! Both 4 Kh2? Kh4! 5 Kg2 Kg4 6 Kf2 Kf4 7 Ke2 Kg3 −+ and 4 Kg2? Kg4! etc.—see Black with the opposition) 4 . . . Kg5 (Black keeps the distant opposition. 4 . . . Kg4 5 Kg2 would give White the opposition ensuring the draw) 5 Kf1!! Black can no longer maintain the distant opposition (5 . . . Kf5 is illegal!) and White draws easily 5 . . . Kf4 6 Kf2 The Opposition! 6 . . . Ke4 7 Ke2 f4 8 Kf2, etc, when Black's king will never be in front of his pawn again.

King and pawn endings are littered with examples of the opposition and the reader is advised to make sure that he understands and recognizes the importance of this vital principle.

We conclude this section with an example from the last century:

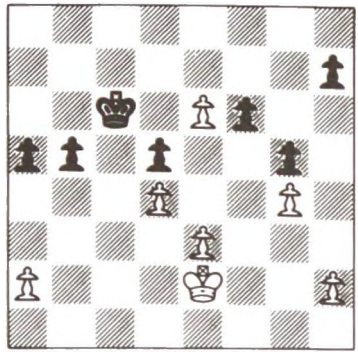


Diagram 89
H. Pillsbury–I. Gunsberg
Hastings
1895

It seems as if Pillsbury has problems because his pawn on e6 looks certain to fall, but he finds a clever resource: 32 e4! dxe4 33 d5+ all of a sudden White has two connected passed pawns! 33 . . . Kd6 (naturally not 33 . . . Kxd5 34 e7 + –) 34 Ke3 b4 (34 . . . f5 is no better—35 gxf5 b4 36 f6 a4 37 f7 Ke7 38 d6+ Kf8 39 d7 Ke7 40 d8=Q+ + –) 35 Kxe4 a4 36 Kd4 White keeps his king in the 'square' of the a-pawn 36 . . . h5 (This loses quickly. Gunsberg's best try was 36 . . . Ke7! 37 Kc4 b3 38 axb3 a3! 39 Kc3 f5! creating a potential passed pawn. 40 gxf5 h5 41 b4! a2 42 Kb2 a1=Q+ 43 Kxa1. Now when Black promotes his pawn White will be in check! 43 . . . g4 44 b5 h4 45 b6 g3 46 hxg3 hxg3 47 d6+! Kxd6 48 b7 Kc7 49 e7 g2 50 b8=Q+ Kxb8 51 e8=Q+ and White wins by one tempo!) 37 gxh5 a3 38 Kc4 (otherwise Black might play . . . b3, e.g. 38 h6? b3! 39 h7 bxa2 40 h8=Q a1=Q+ with a draw) 38 . . . f5 39 h6 f4 40 h7 resigns.

QUEEN ENDINGS

It is not the objective of this book to offer a systematic coverage of all the endings, so we shall only consider a few examples which the author considers to be instructive.

Queen versus King and Pawn on the 7th Rank

This type of position can often arise at the end of a pawn race where one side promotes and the other side is a move behind. Consider the following situation:

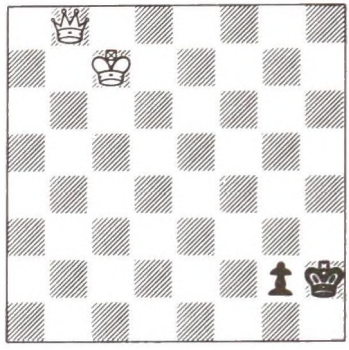


Diagram 90

This position would be a clear draw if it were Black to move 1 . . . g1=Q. But White to play can initiate a series of checks to force the black king on to the queening square, enabling the white king to assist in the demise of the black pawn, e.g. 1 Kc6+ Kh3 2 Qa7 (threatening 3 Qg1 when White has plenty of time to bring his king over) 2 . . . Kh2 3 Qf2 Kh1 4 Qh4+ Kg1 5 Kd5 Kf1 6 Qf4+ Ke2 7 Qg3 forcing Black's reply 7 . . . Kf1 8 Qf3+; a standard position to aim for 8 . . . Kg1 9 Ke4 Kh2 10 Qf2 Kh1 11 Qh4+ Kg1 12 Kf3 Kf1 13 Qf2 mate. It was not even necessary to win the pawn! This winning procedure always applies to pawns on the two centre files (d- and e-), and the knight files (b- and g-). Pawns on the rooks (a- and h-) and bishops (c- and f-); files offer the defending side drawing prospects due to the stalemate resource, thus:

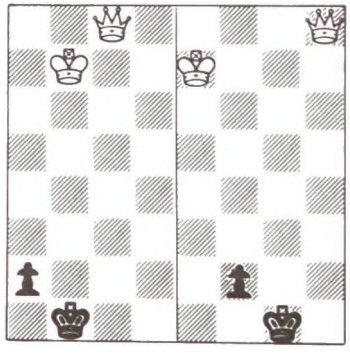


Diagram 91

In the left-hand side of Diagram 91 White's winning procedure fails as follows—1 Qf5+ Kb2 2 Qb5+ Kc2 3 Qa4+ Kb1 4 Qb3+ Ka1 and now White cannot move his king because Black would be stalemated. The same goes for the right-hand side of Diagram 91, e.g. 1 Qg7+ Kh2 2 Qh6+ Kg2 3 Qg5+ Kh2 4 Qh4+ Kg2 5 Qg4+ Kh2 6 Qf3 Kg1 7 Qg3+; again the standard position is reached, and again the defending king can go happily into the corner 7 . . . Kh1 for 8 Qxf2 is stalemate.

This stalemate resource will generally enable the inferior side to draw, unless the enemy king is close enough to construct a mating net like this:

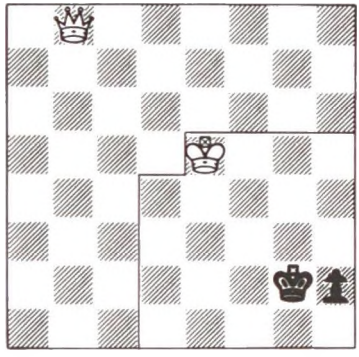


Diagram 92

With the white king inside the outlined area, it is possible to construct a mating net as follows—1 Qb2+ Kg1 2 Kf4 h1=Q 3 Kg3! when Black with equal material and the move, cannot prevent mate! If the white king were on e4 instead, then the win is even simpler—1 Qb2+ Kg1 2 Ke3 h1=Q 3 Qf2 mate.

Queen versus Queen and Pawns

Because of the power of the queen, such endings often result in a draw due to the very real possibility of perpetual check. For our first example we shall consider a few episodes from a monumental struggle between the Icelandic Grandmaster Sigurjonsson and one of Britain's leading players Tony Miles, played at Hastings in 1976:

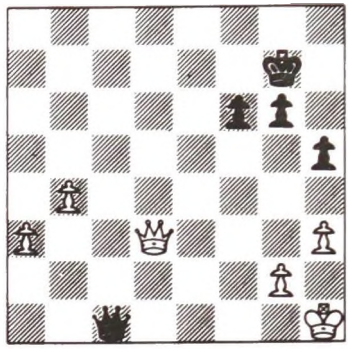


Diagram 93
G. Sigurjonsson–
A. J. Miles Hastings
1975/6

Miles has just exchanged rooks on c1 and now has the arduous task of defending the resulting queen and pawn ending. Play continued—49 Kh2 h4 this pawn move sets up various perpetual check threats by controlling the g3 square. 50 Qd6 (Sigurjonsson defends the b8–h2 diagonal and threatens 51 Qe7 winning the f-pawn) 50 . . . Qe3 51 Qc5 Qg3+ 52 Kg1 Qe1+ 53 Kh2 Qg3+ 54 Kh1 g5 55 Qe7+ Kg6 56 Qe4+ f5 57 Qe6+ Kg7 58 Qxf5 Miles is not worried about the loss of his f-pawn because he now picks up the a-pawn 58 . . . Qe1+ 59 Kh2 Qg3+ 60 Kg1 Qe1+ 61 Qf1 Qe3+ 62 Qf2 Qc1+! Miles is in no hurry to capture the a-pawn, since he can tie White down first of all 63 Kh2 Qc7+ 64 Kh1 (not 64 g3? hxg3+ 65 Qxg3 Qc2+ with perpetual check in sight) 64 . . . Qc1+ 65 Qg1. Now that White's forces are bunched in the corner Black grabs the a-pawn. 65 . . . Qxa3 66 Qd4+ Kf7 67 Qd6 Qc1 + 68 Kh2 Qc4 69 Qb8 g4 70 hxg4 Qxg4. The exchange of pawns takes Black closer to his goal. 71 Qc7+ Ke8 72 b5 h3—offering the h-pawn to expose the white king. 73 Qe5+ Kd7 74 gxh3 Qc4.

We jump ahead to move 103 where we note that White has been able to make very little progress, and even has to ditch his b-pawn:

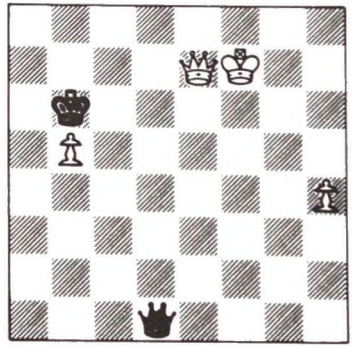


Diagram 94

The game continued—103 Qe6+ Kxb5 104 Qe5+ Ka4: keeping the king out of harm's way! 105 h5 Qf3+ 106 Ke6 Qc6+ 107 Kf5 Qc8+ 108 Kg5 Qg8+ 109 Kf4 Qf7+ 110 Ke4 Qb7+ 111 Qd5 Qe7+ 112 Kd4 White is moving towards the black king so as to be able to interpose a check with a counter-check 112 . . . Qg7+ 113 Kc5 Qf8+ 114 Kc4 Qf1+. We jump ahead again, and note that Miles's patient manoeuvring has prevented White from making progress:

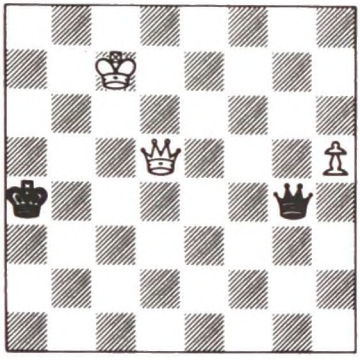


Diagram 95

Play continued—136 . . . Qf4+ 137 Qd6 Qc4+ 138 Qc6+ Ka5! (A lovely touch of humour from Miles—139 Qxc4 is stalemate!) 139 h6 Qf7+ 140 Qd7 Qc4+ 141 Kb8 (141 Qc6 Qf7+ repeats moves) 141 . . . Qb4+ 142 Kc8 Qc5+ 143 Qc7+ Ka6! Again!! 144 h7 Qf8+ 145 Qd8 Qc5+ Draw agreed. 146 Qc7 Qf8+ 147 Kd7 Qf7+ 148 Kd6 Qf4+ 149 Kc6 Qc4+ draws, as does 146 Kd7 Qf5+ winning the h-pawn. So after nearly 100 moves of patient defence Miles got his half-point reward. An important principle in all queen and pawn endings, is to keep the queen actively placed in the centre where she can be most effective while restraining her counterpart. Miles's play in this example illustrated the point admirably.

Our final example in this section is taken from one of the author's games:

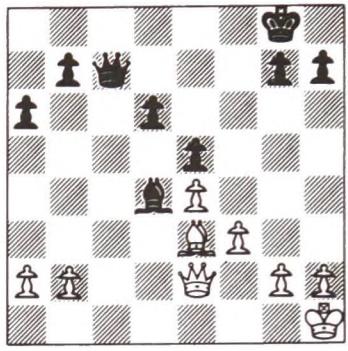


Diagram 96
G. D. Keane–Povah
London
1976

White played 26 h3 providing an escape for his king and play continued—26 . . . Qc5! 27 Bxd4 (the alternatives 27 Bd2 loses the b-pawn and 27 Bg5 h6 makes matters worse) 27 . . . exd4! This pawn recapture, which White had failed to consider, is very strong 28 Qd3 (not the suicidal 28 Kg1?? d3+ 29 Qf2 d2 30 Qxc5 d1=Q+ wins) 28 . . . b5! 29 Kh2 (29 b3 Qc3 is hopeless, while 29 Kg1 Qc1+ 30 Kf2 Qxb2+ is no better) 29 . . . Qc4 30 Qa3 White's only hope lies in activating his queen so as to set up some perpetual check threats. 30 . . . b4 keeping the white queen out of play: 31 Qa4 h6 stopping mate and providing a safe haven for the king 32 Kg3? (32 Qe8+ Kh7 33 Qf8! offered better prospects, because if White can tie Black down with perpetual threats, then he can safely activate his king to deal with Black's d-pawn, e.g. 33 . . . Qe6 34 Kg1 d3 35 Kf2 with good drawing chances. But 33 . . . Qc5! is much stronger, e.g. 34 Kg1 d3+ 35 Kf1 Qc1+ 36 Kf2 Qxb2+ 37 Ke3 Qe2+ 38 Kd4 Qxg2 offers good winning chances) 32 . . . d3 33 Kf4 d2 34 resigns. The d-pawn is too strong, e.g. 34 Qd1? Qc1 wins immediately, as does 34 Ke3 Qc1 while 34 Qe8+ Kh7 35 Qf8 is ineffective 35 . . . d1=Q 36 Qf5+ Kh8 37 Qf8+ Qg8–+.

ROOK ENDINGS

Rook and pawn endings are probably the most common endings in chess, because the rooks are quite often the last pieces to be exchanged off. Rook endings are frequently drawn, sometimes even when one side has an extra pawn, because rooks are extremely

efficient at demolishing enemy pawns. We shall consider two of the most important basic positions in rook endings where one side has an extra pawn, since many rook endings will simplify into one of these cases:

Philidor's position

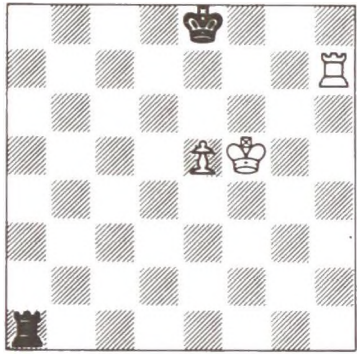


Diagram 97
Philidor
1777

This position is drawn because Black's king controls the queening square, and accurate defence will make it impossible for White to improve his position. Philidor demonstrated the correct defensive procedure over 200 years ago—1 . . . Ra6! Black prevents the white king from advancing, and since rook checks can be answered by . . . Ke7 . . . Ke8, etc., White must play 2 e6 (any attempts to drive the black rook off the 3rd rank fail as follows—2 Rg7 Rb6 3 Rg6 Rxg6! 4 Kxg6 Ke7 5 Kf5 Kf7 with a drawn king and pawn ending) 2 . . . Ra1! This move ensures the draw because Black will start a relentless series of rook checks from behind, thus 3 Kf6 Rf1 + 4 Ke5 Re1 + 5 Kd5 Rd1 + 6 Kc4 Rc1 + 7 Kd3 Re1! 8 Rh6 Ke7 wins the e-pawn.

The drawing principle in this ending may be summed up—'place the defending rook on the third rank to prevent the enemy king from advancing. When the pawn goes to his 6th rank the rook is transferred to the back rank to commence checking from behind.'

It is worth noting that the position in Diagram 97 is still drawn with White to move—1 Kf6 (the best winning try, since 1 e6 Rf1 + and 1 Ke6 Ra6 + both lead to positions already considered) 1 . . . Re1! 2 Rh8 + (2 e6 Rf1 + is all right for Black) 2 . . . Kd7 and White cannot advance his e-pawn, so . . . 3 Rh7 + Ke8 =.

Lucena's position

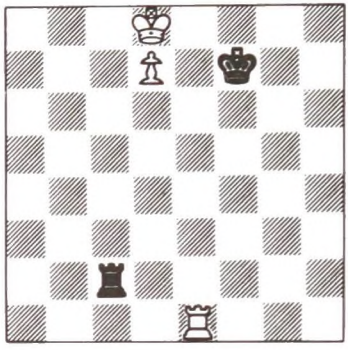


Diagram 98
Lucena
1497

Lucena analysed the diagram position nearly 500 years ago and he demonstrated two different winning procedures. We shall consider one of them—1 Rf1+ this check drives the black king away so that the white king can emerge—1 . . . Kg7 (not 1 . . . Ke6? 2 Ke8 when White queens) 2 Rf4! (this is the *star move*; White prepares to bring his king out of hiding. If he tries the immediate 2 Ke7 then he runs into trouble as follows—2 . . . Re2+ 3 Kd6 Rd2+ 4 Kc5 Rc2+ 5 Kb5 Rb2 + 6 Kc4 Rd2 wins the d-pawn) 2 . . . Rc1 what else? 3 Ke7 Re1 + 4 Kd6 Rd1 + 5 Ke6 Re1 + 6 Kd5 Rd1 + 7 Rd4! The point! The white king shelters behind his rook, and his pawn promotes. This winning procedure is known as 'the bridge building' method.

We now turn our attention to a few examples of rook endings with several pawns:

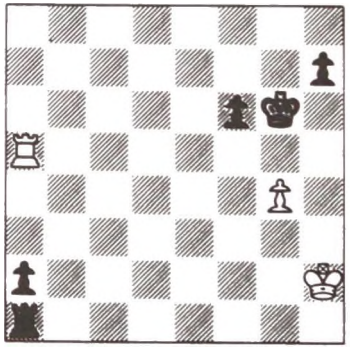


Diagram 99
D. L. Meen–Povah
Hammersmith
1972

This particular example made an effective impression upon the author, who overheard a well-known British player saying, 'that looks drawn'—it was nice to prove him wrong! If we remove the f-, g- and h-pawns from the board, then the position is undoubtedly drawn; White simply plays Kg2–h2–g2, etc., and if Black marches to b2 to try to free his rook from its guard duty, then White starts checking with his rook as far away as possible, e.g. Rb8–a8–c8+ etc. However, with the king-side pawns Black has a winning ploy—52 . . . h5! Black sacrifices his h-pawn to create a passed f-pawn. 53 gxh5+ (not 53 Rxh5 when 53 . . . Rb1 allows Black to promote). 53 . . . Kh6 54 Kg2 (54 Ra6 Kxh5 doesn't help White because he cannot play 55 Rxf6 due to 55 . . . Rb1 again) 54 . . . f5 55 Kh2 f4 56 resigns. The f-pawn is immune to capture because the white rook dare not leave the a-file, and 56 Kg2 f3+ 57 Kxf3 loses to 57 . . . Rf1+ and a1=Q or 57 Kf2 Rh1! 58 Rxa2 Rh2+ wins.

Our next example was described by Irving Chernev as 'the most instructive rook and pawn ending ever played'. He may well be right as the reader may judge for himself:

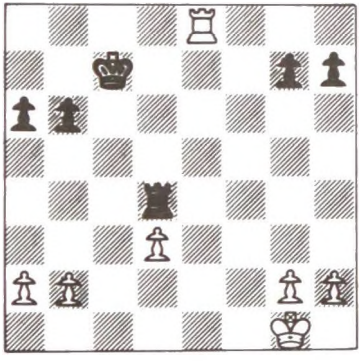


Diagram 100
S. Tarrasch–E. Thorold
Manchester
1890

Tarrasch who perpetrated many tactical brilliances is a pawn up in this tricky ending, and he now treats us to a demonstration of sheer perfection in endgame technique—26 Re3! (the tempting 26 Re7+ Kd6 27 Rxg7 Rxd3 28 Rxh7 Rd1+ 29 Kf2 Rd2+ 30 Kf3 Rxb2 leaves White on top, but Black would have more drawing chances than he deserves. Tarrasch's move keeps the black rook out of the white position) 26 . . . Kd7 27 Kf2 g6 28 Rh3! This forces Black to weaken his pawns further, and enables the white king to relieve the rook of his defensive duties. 28 . . . h5—now the g-pawn is a target. 29 Ke3

Rd6 30 d4 Re6+ 31 Kd3 Re8 32 Rg3 Re6 Black's rook is tied down to defence of the g-pawn. 33 Re3 Rd6: naturally, Black cannot exchange rooks while being a pawn behind. 34 Re5 Rf6 35 a4! Tarrasch moves his pawns away from the vulnerability of the second rank. 35 . . . Rf2 36 Re2 Rf6 37 b4 Rf1 38 Re5 Rf2 (If Black tries to attack the queen-side pawns by 38 . . . Ra1 or 38 . . . Rb1 then White answers 39 a5 or 39 b5) 39 Rg5 Rf6 (not 39 . . . Rb2 40 Kc3 Ra2 41 Rxg6 Rxa4 42 Rxb6 + −) 40 h3! (Tarrasch has played the ending with great skill and patience, and this move is no exception. He wishes to play 40 d5 but 40 . . . Rf4 is irritating, while 40 Ke4 allows 40 . . . Re6+ 41 Re5 Rc6 with counter-chances. So he waits for Black to commit himself, and he does.) 40 . . . Kd6 41 Ke4 Re6+ 42 Re5 Rf6 (42 . . . Rc6 is not possible now) 43 d5! Kd7 44 Rg5 Kd6 (otherwise 45 Ke5 is embarrassing) 45 Rg3 Ke7 46 Rf3! This move drives the black rook off the useful f-file. 46 . . . Rd6 47 Ke5 Rd8 (White threatened 48 Rf7+ Kxf7 49 Kxd6 Ke8 50 Kc7 with a simple win) 48 d6+! Kd7 (48 . . . Rxd6 fails to the aforementioned resource 49 Rf7+ Kxf7 50 Kxd6 when the white king would rapidly devour Black's queen-side pawns). 49 Rf7+ Kc8 50 Rc7+ Kb8 51 Rc2 Re8+ 52 Kf6 b5 53 d7 Rh8 (not 53 . . . Rd8 54 Ke7 + −) 54 Ke7 Rh7+ 55 Kd6 Rh8 56 Re2 resigns. 57 Re8+ is imminent. Tarrasch's technique made this ending look so easily won that it seemed that White could hardly fail, but anyone who has played rook and pawn endings will know just how difficult they can be.

Finally, an amusing and instructive problem by Saavedra:

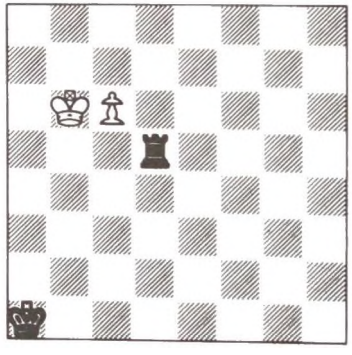


Diagram 101
F. Saavedra
1895

A rook will generally win against a lone pawn unless the king cannot assist in preventing the pawn from promoting, in which case the rook will have to be sacrificed.

The diagram position shows one of those rare occasions when it is not even possible to sacrifice the rook. Play continues—1 c7 Rd6+ (forced since . . . Rd8 and . . . Rc5 both lose) 2 Kb5! (not 2 Kb7 Rd7 = or 2 Kc5 Rd1 followed by . . . Rc1) 2 . . . Rd5+ 3 Kb4 Rd4+ 4 Kb3 Rd3+ 5 Kc2! Now Black can no longer rely on the skewer on the c-file and . . . Rd8 is hopeless so all looks lost, but—5 . . . Rd4! (Very clever! If White promotes to a queen Black draws 6 c8=Q Rc4+! 7 Qxc4 stalemate!) 6 c8=R! Now we have one of those rare cases where a win is possible in a rook versus rook ending. 6 . . . Ra4 (forced to prevent 7 Ra8 mate) 7 Kb3! and White wins either the rook or forces mate with 8 Rc1. A clever conception!

MINOR PIECE ENDINGS

Minor piece endings are probably the least understood endings of all, simply because it is hard to draw upon useful generalizations. We will consider some special cases.

Bishops of opposite colour

These endings are often thought to be 'drawish' because each player controls one colour complex, making it difficult for progress to be made. It is worth enumerating some basic themes.

1. Bishop and pawn versus bishop is almost certainly a draw.
2. With many pawns, one extra pawn is usually not enough to win, unless there are special circumstances and there is play (pawns) on both wings (see Diagram 107).
3. Two extra pawns does not always guarantee a win, but winning prospects are increased the more files there are between the pawns. (Connected pawns are better, however, than the worst case when the pawns are separated by only one file.)
4. Two connected pawns will generally only win if they are already on the fifth rank, unless the inferior side's pieces are poorly placed.

Salvioli (1889) demonstrated the winning procedure for disconnected pawns at least two files apart:

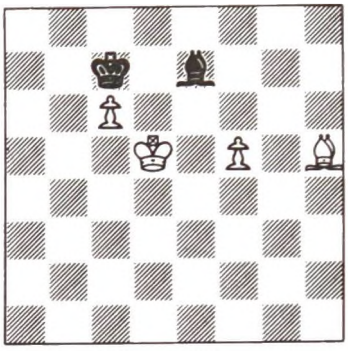


Diagram 102
C. Salvioli
1889

Black has both pawns blockaded at the moment, but White breaks the blockade by forcing the advance of his f-pawn—1 Bf3 the c-pawn must be protected to free the king. 1 . . . Bh4 2 Ke6 Kd8 3 f6 Bg5 4 f7 Bh6 5 Kf6 Bf8 6 Kg6 Ke7 7 Kh7 Kd8 (not 7 . . . Kxf7 8 c7+ −) 8 Kg8 wins. There is one important exception to this particular ending, if one of the pawns is 'the wrong-coloured rook pawn'.

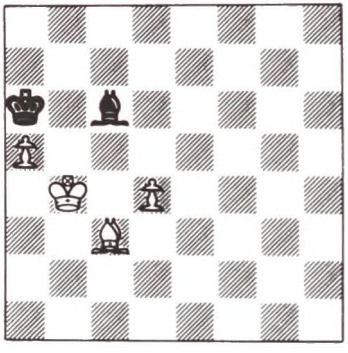


Diagram 103

White cannot win as in the last example because after—1 Kc5 Bf3 2 d5 Bxd5 3 Kxd5 Kb7 4 Kc5 Ka8 we have the familiar drawn 'bishop and wrong rook pawn' position, since the black king can never be evicted from a8. The reader is advised to check this for himself. Another drawn case exists if the inferior side can blockade the pawns along a single diagonal. Consider the following case:

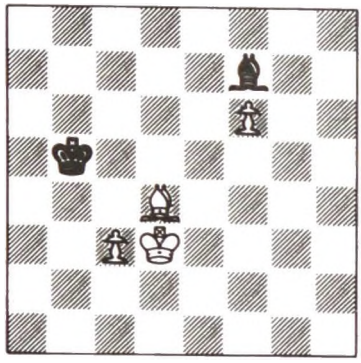


Diagram 104

The standard plan of using the king to remove the bishop's blockade fails as follows—1 Ke4 Kc6: the bishop on f7 holds up White's c-pawn as well. 2 Kf5 Kd6 3 Kg5 Kd7 4 Kh6 Ke8 5 Kg7 Bc4 and White has made no progress. No better is—1 Be3 Bg8 2 Kd4 Bf7 3 Ke5 Kc6! with no further progress possible.

We now consider connected pawns. Diagram 105 shows a typical case where the win is possible due to the poor placement of the defender's pieces:

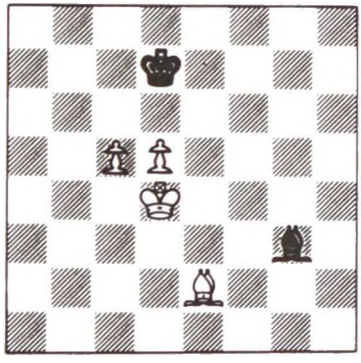


Diagram 105

White plays—1 Bb5+ (this check controls two important white squares in front of the pawns c6 and d7; therefore it is more effective than Bg4+) 1 . . . Ke7 2 Ba4 (this prepares the white king's march to the queen side. Both 2 d6+? Bxd6 and 2 c6? Kd6 would draw) 2 . . . Bf4 3 Kc4 Bg3 4 Kb5 Kd7 5 Kb6+ Ke7 6 Kc6 Bf4 7 Bb3 Bg3 8 d6+ Kd8 9 Kd5 when 10 c6 will enable White to achieve the winning position with two pawns on the sixth rank.

If Black had adopted the correct defensive stance as shown in Diagram 106 then he could have ensured the draw:

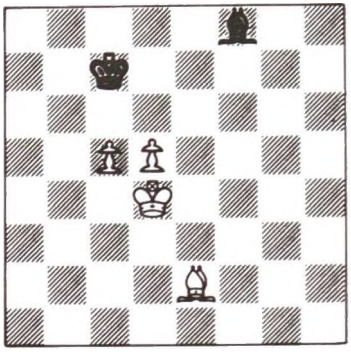


Diagram 106

White can make no progress since (a) d6 is always met by the Bishop sacrifice . . . Bxd6 (b) the white king is tied down to the defence of the c-pawn and (c) c6 gives up the dark squares for ever. Therefore, all Black needs to do is 'pass' with Be7–f8–e7, etc. From this we can deduce that if White's pawns were on the sixth rank, Black would not have the 'pass-move' and he would be in zugzwang. Check this for yourself!

In case you think that 'bishop of opposite colour' (BOC) endings are easily drawn if you are one pawn behind, take heed from the following example:

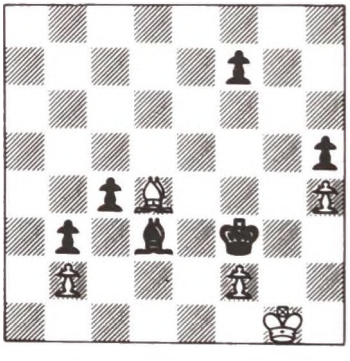


Diagram 107
P. Walker–Povah
Inter-county
1972

Both my opponent and the adjudicator thought this position was drawn, after all BOC endings are always drawn, aren't they? How-

ever, this one is far from simple. Apart from his extra pawn, Black has several factors in his favour. (a) White's king is passively trapped in the corner, (b) White has a weak h-pawn and (c) There is play on both wings. The reader should try to find Black's unusual winning strategy, paying particular attention to the aforementioned points, for without any one of them the position would probably be drawn: e.g. if White's pawn were on h2 instead of h4 the position is drawn.

The winning procedure was as follows: 60 . . . f5 61 Kh2 f4 62 Kh1 Kg4 63 Bf6 (White's bishop is now rooted to this square because he must protect the weak h-pawn, and he dare not leave the a1–h8 diagonal otherwise . . . c3 wins). 63 . . . Kh3 64 Kg1 f3 65 Kh1 Bf1 66 Kg1 Bg2. The point! White is in zugzwang! Play might continue 67 Bc3 (not 67 Bg5 c3! 68 Bf6 cxb2 69 Bxb2 Kxh4 – +) 67 . . . Kxh4 68 Kh2 Kg4 69 Bd4 h4 70 Bc3 Kf4 71 Bf6 Ke4 72 Bc3 (note that White's king is imprisoned on g1 and h2, and 72 Bxh4 c3 is fatal) 72 . . . Kd3 73 Bf6 Ke2 74 Kg1 (74 Bd4 Kf1 would be zugzwang again!) 74 . . . Bh3 (74 . . . h3? 75 Bd4! Ke1 76 Bc3+ Ke2 77 Bd4 gets Black nowhere) 75 Bd4 Bf5 76 Bf6 (76 Kh2 Kf1 77 Kh1 Bh3 78 Kh2 Bg2 zugzwang!) 76 . . . h3 77 Bd4 Be6 zugzwang again! 78 Kh2 (78 Bf6 h2+! 79 Kxh2 Kxf2 80 Bd4+ Ke2 81 Kg3 Bd5 zugzwang, since Black will force either . . . f2 or . . . c3) 78 . . . c3! 79 Bxc3! (naturally not 79 bxc3 b2 winning) 79 . . . Kxf2 80 Bd4 + Ke2 81 Kg3 h2 82 Kxh2 f2 83 Bxf2 Kxf2 84 Kh1 Ke2 and Black's b-pawn decides the game. As can be seen from the above analysis, the win was quite involved, but it was there to be found.

BISHOP VERSUS KNIGHT ENDINGS

It is a question of eternal debate which is better, the knight or the bishop? Obviously there is no hard and fast answer, since the position will always dictate which is to be preferred. In general we may observe that the bishop prefers 'open' positions with few pawns, while the knight has a preference for blocked positions with many pawns.

Our first position shows a knight triumphing over a bishop because Black's bishop was severely restricted by his own pawns:

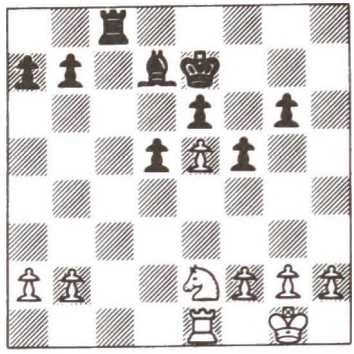


Diagram 108
R. Emerson–G. D. Lee
National Club
Championship
1979

White realizing the superiority of his knight over Black's bishop offers the exchange of rooks. 30 Rc1 Bc6: Black decides to avoid the exchange and White now gives an instructive display of how to handle the classic 'good' knight against 'bad' bishop. 31 Nd4 Kd7 32 h4 White gradually 'fixes' Black's pawns on light squares. 32 . . . Rg8 33 Rc3! White's rook takes up residence on the third rank in order to harass Black's pawns at the appropriate moment—33 . . . Rh8 34 g3 Rg8 35 f4 Black is well and truly tied up, his pieces are passively placed with no enemy targets to attack. 35 . . . Re8: This will allow the black king to go for a wander, but where is he going to go? 36 Kg2 Kc7 37 g4! White starts his breakthrough on the king side while Black's forces are occupied. 37 . . . Kb6 38 Kg3 Bd7 39 g5 Rh8! This prevents White's intended h5 and it seems as if his position has reached an impasse, but he can still strengthen his grip of the dark squares. 40 b4! Rh7 41 Re5 (restraining 41 . . . a5 and giving him absolute control of the dark squares) 41 . . . Re7? (A fatal error allowing a quick breakthrough. 41 . . . Rh8 was better when White could try 42 a4! threatening a5+ and Rc7 when Black would be completely stymied.) 42 h5! This temporary pawn sacrifice gives White a powerful passed g-pawn. 42 . . . gxh5 43 Kh4 White's absolute control of the dark squares means that all the adjacent light squares are vulnerable. 43 . . . Be8 44 Rc8. Finally White's rook penetrates Black's position—a victory for patience! 44 . . . a5 45 a3 axb4 46 axb4 resigns. Black hardly has a move, e.g. 46 . . . Bg6 47 Rg8 Be8 48 g6 intending Kxh5 and Kg5–f6+– or 46 . . . Ka6 47 Rxe8! Rxe8 48 Kxh5 when White's g-pawn proves too strong for the black rook.

Our next example illustrates the superiority of a bishop over a

knight in an endgame where there are pawns on both sides of the board:

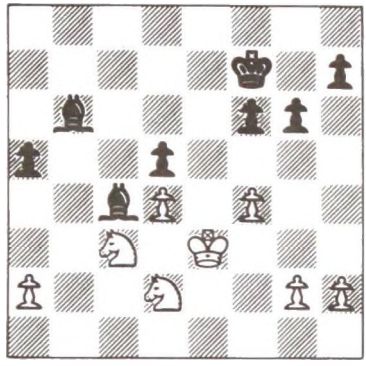


Diagram 109
Bellin–Povah
Borehamwood
1978

Black in fact enjoys the aforementioned advantage twice over, for he has two bishops against two knights! White, therefore, feels that it would be wise to exchange off one of the bishops, but in so doing he gives Black a passed pawn—an even greater evil! Play continued 41 Nxc4?! dxc4 42 Ke4 Ke6 43 d5+ ?! This pawn advance is dubious on two counts—first it increases the scope of Black's bishop and second the d-pawn is weak. 43 . . . Kd6 (Black's advantage is clear since he threatens 44 . . . f5+ 45 Kf3 Bd4 followed by 46 . . . Kxd5 −+) 44 g4 f5+! Black temporarily sacrifices a pawn to force a breakthrough on the queen side. 45 gxf5 gxf5+ 46 Kxf5 Bd4 47 Nb5+ Kxd5 48 Nc7+ White dare not exchange pieces because Black's c-pawn is much too quick for the white f-pawn 48 . . . Kc6 (not 48 . . . Kc5? allowing 49 Ne6+ Kd5 50 Nc7+ with no progress) 49 Ke4 Bg1; with his king active White would like an exchange of minor pieces; but Black is not having any of that! 50 Ne6 Bxh2 51 Kd4 (The power of the bishop is illustrated by a variation such as 51 f5 c3 52 f6—not 52 Kd3? Be5 when Black's h-pawn and mobile king should see him win—52 . . . Bd6 53 f7 h5 58 Kd3 h4 59 Ng5 Bb4 when the bishop is performing several useful functions until the king can be activated) 51 . . . Kb5 52 Nc7+ (if 52 f5 Kb4 53 a3+ Kxa3 54 Kxc4 a4 55 f6 Kb2 56 f7 Bd6 and the bishop can be sacrificed for the f-pawn leaving White's knight the impossible task of restraining two ambitious rook pawns; alternatively 53 f6 c3 54 f7 Bd6 55 a3+ Kb3 56 Nc5+ Kxa3 57 Nd3 Kb3 −+) 52 . . . Ka4 (52 . . . Kb4 allows 53 Nd5+) 53 Kxc4 Bxf4 54 Ne6 Be3! notice how the bishop keeps the knight at bay 55 Nd8 Ka3 56 Nc6 a4:

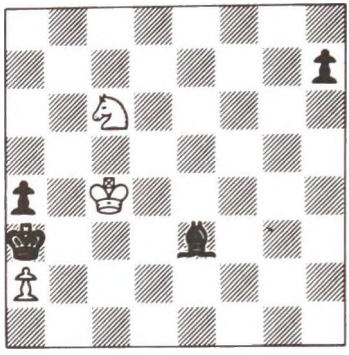


Diagram 110
Bellin–Povah

There are very few pawns left so the win is tricky, for Black must watch out so as not to be caught with bishop and 'wrong' rook pawn (i.e. bishop and h-pawn would be drawn if the White king reaches h1). White tries to keep his a-pawn with 57 Nb4 ?! (he would have had better chances with 57 Kb5 h5 58 Ne5 Bf4 59 Nf3 Bg3 60 Ng5 h4 61 Nh3 Be1! 62 Nf4 Bd2 63 Nh3 Be3. Again the bishop restrains the knight, and in fact this time the knight is trapped, so White's move is forced 64 Ka5—other moves would allow 64 . . . Kxa2 without loss of Black's a-pawn—64 . . . Kb2!! Black cannot afford to capture the a-pawn if he wants to win the race to the trapped knight. 65 Kxa4—not 65 Kb4? a3 winning easily—65 . . . Kc3 66 Kb5 Kd4 67 Kc6; obviously not 67 a4 Ke4 68 a5 Kf3 69 a6 Kg4! 70 a7 Bxa7 −+ when we see the strength of the bishop who is capable of monitoring both sides of the board at once; 67 . . . Ke4 68 a4 Kf3 69 Kd5 Kg4 70 Ke4 Kxh3—not 70 . . . Ba7? 71 Nf4 with equality—71 Kxe3 Kg3 72 a5 h3 73 a6 h2 74 a7 h1=Q winning by one tempo!) 57 . . . Bd2 58 resigns. The conclusion might have been 58 Nc2+ Kxa2 59 Kb5 Kb3 60 Nd4+ Kc3 61 Ne2+ Kd3 when one of Black's pawns will reincarnate.

We now conclude this chapter with a brief examination of several important and common situations.

1. QUEEN VERSUS ROOK (AND PAWN)

A queen will nearly always win against a rook unless the defending side can catch his opponent with a stalemate trap. Consider Diagram 111:

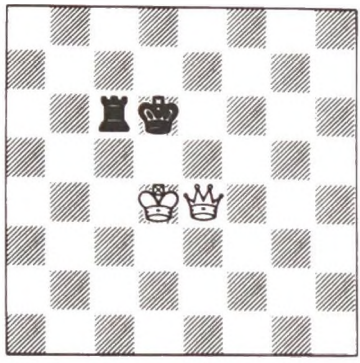


Diagram 111

In order to win, White must force his opponent's king to the edge of the board—1 Qe5+ Kd7 2 Kd5 Rc7 other moves are naturally possible but they come to a similar conclusion. 3 Qe6+ Kd8 4 Qg8+ (not 4 Kd6?? allowing Black one of his resources 4 . . . Rc6+! 5 Kxc6 stalemate) 4 . . . Ke7 5 Qg7+ Kd8 6 Qf8+ Kd7 7 Qf4! (The simplest winning move, although both 7 Qh8 and 7 Qb8 win) 7 . . . Kc8 8 Kd6 Kb8 9 Qe5! Rb7 (no better are 9 . . . Rc8 10 Kd7 +! Kb7 11 Qb5+ +– or 9 . . . Rc2 10 Qb5+ winning the rook next move; all other moves have a similar fate) 10 Kc6+ Ka8 11 Qa1+ Kb8 (not 11 . . . Ra7 12 Qh8 mate) 12 Qa5! We now have another position analysed by Philidor, who proved the win back in 1777! 12 . . . Rb1 (the reader might like to find the winning sequences after 12 . . . Rh7, 12 . . . Rb3 and 12 . . . Rf7; naturally 12 . . . Rb2 loses instantly to 13 Qe5+ forking king and rook) 13 Qd8+ Ka7 14 Qd4+ Ka8 15 Qh8+ Ka7 16 Qh7+ picks up the rook. A queen should always be able to force the win against a rook, unless an exceptional case such as that given below were to arise:

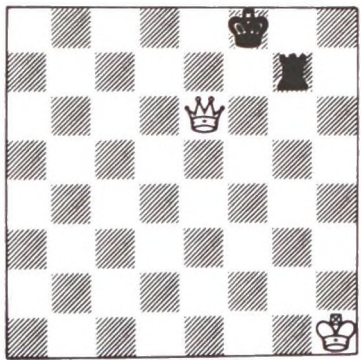


Diagram 112

This position is amusingly drawn with Black to move—1 . . . Rh7+ 2 Kg2 Rg7+ 3 Kf3 Rf7+ 4 Kg4 (Ke4 Re7 is no good) 4 . . . Rg7+ 5 Kf5 Rf7+ 6 Kg6 Rg7+ and now 7 Kf6 Rg6+ draws as already mentioned, and so does 7 Kh6 Rh7+! 8 Kxh7 stalemate. If it were White to move, then the position is naturally won.

The case of queen against rook and pawn is not so clear cut, and we will leave the study of this intriguing ending to the reader. Suffice it to say that in general the ending is a win, but it is possible to draw if the pawn is unmoved and the rook can keep the enemy king at bay. Philidor demonstrated in 1803 that Diagram 113 is a draw:

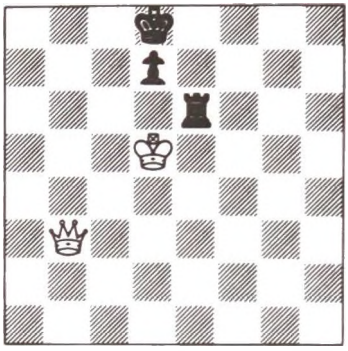


Diagram 113
Philidor
1803

Black can play . . . Rc6 and back to e6 so zugzwang is ruled out and progress for White is impossible, e.g. 1 Qb8+ Ke7 2 Qg8 Rc6 3 Qg7+ Kd8 4 Qf8+ Kc7 5 Qa8 Re6, etc.

2 ROOK AND MINOR PIECE VERSUS ROOK

This particular ending of rook and minor piece against rook is usually drawn, although there are certain winning positions—more so with the bishop.

Rook and Bishop versus Rook

This case is quite common in tournament play, and because the defence is difficult it often results in a win; therefore we shall concentrate on the correct defensive procedure:

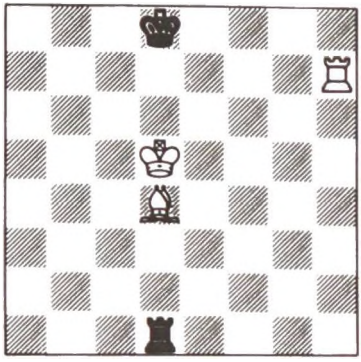


Diagram 114
Flohr–Reshevsky
Semmering–Baden
1937

Play continued—1 . . . Rd2 2 Ke5 Kc8! 3 Bc5 Rd7 4 Be7 Kb7 5 Ke6 Kc6 6 Rh1 Rd2 7 Rc1+ Kb5 8 Bd6 Re2+ and it was clear that White was getting nowhere; in fact a further ten moves saw them reach a position analogous to the diagram and a draw was agreed—9 Kd7 Re4 10 Rc5+ Ka4 11 Kc6 Kb3 12 Kd5 Re8 13 Rb5+ Kc2 14 Bc5 Kd3 15 Rb3+ Ke2 16 Bd4 Rd8+ 17 Ke4 Re8+ 18 Be5 Ke1 19 Rb2 Re7 ½–½. By maintaining the pin on the bishop White cannot set up mating threats. The reader should guard against over-simplification, for this ending deserves careful study from specialist endgame books.

Rook and Knight versus Rook

The defence here is even easier because the defending king cannot be driven to the edge of the board as is shown in the following example:

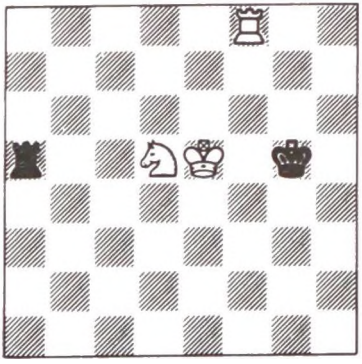


Diagram 115
Toth–Pritchett
EEC Team Tournament
1978

The players entered this ending on move 76 and accurate defence by Pritchett had taken them to this position. Play continued 90 . . . Kg4 91 Rc8 Kf3 92 Rc3+ Kg4 93 Rd3 Rc5 94 Ra3 Rb5 95 Ke4 Rb1 96 Ra5 Kg3 97 Ra4 Rb8 98 Nf6 Rb3 99 Nd5 Rb8 100 Ra3+ Kg4 101 Ne3+ Kg5 102 Ra5+ Kg6 and Toth soon gave up in despair.

If the defending king is already on the edge of the board then a win is sometimes possible, but the complexity of this ending is such that we could not do it justice here. Again the diligent reader should consult basic endgame texts.

3 ROOK VERSUS MINOR PIECE

This ending is again usually drawn, but as always there are exceptions when the defending king is on the edge of the board, so beware!

Rook versus Bishop

Diagram 116 shows two contrasting cases:

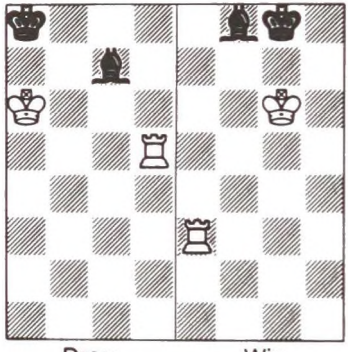


Diagram 116

First, on the left-hand side White cannot win, although his pieces are well placed, because 1 . . . Bb8 2 Rd8 is stalemate and 2 Rg5 Bd6 3 Rg8+ Bb8 always threatens a stalemate.

In the second case on the right-hand side the win is trivial 1 . . . Bd6 2 Re8+ Bf8 3 Ra8 and Black is in zugzwang 3 . . . Kh8 4 Rxf8 mate. From these two cases we can draw this conclusion:

If the defending king is forced to the edge of the board he should aim for the corner not controlled by his bishop, so that he can block a check and set up a stalemate position. This principle, in turn,

implies that the superior side should try to prevent the defending king from reaching the 'safe' corner, and Kling and Horwitz give an impressive example of how this may be achieved:

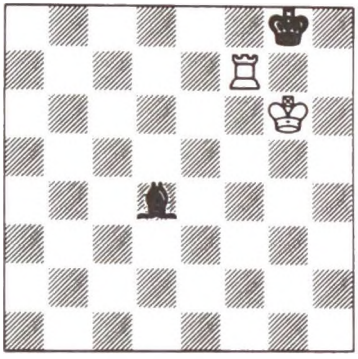


Diagram 117
Kling and Horwitz
1851

White wins no matter where Black places his bishop, so long as the black king does not cross the f-file to seek sanctuary on a8—1 . . . Bg1 (other bishop moves would allow a double threat of mate and loss of the bishop, e.g. 1 . . . Bc3 2 Rc7 wins) 2 Rf1! This forces the bishop into the open 2 . . . Bh2 3 Rf2 Bg3 (3 . . . Bg1 4 Rg2 is the same) 4 Rg2! Bd6 (if instead 4 . . . Bf4 or 4 . . . Bh4 then 5 Kf5+ or 5 Kh5+ is decisive) 5 Rd2 Bc7 (5 . . . Be7 6 Ra2! wins since 7 Ra8+ cannot be prevented and unfortunately 6 . . . Kf8 7 Ra8+ would force 7 . . . Bd8 to provide a flight square for the black king) 6 Rd7 Bb6 7 Rb7 wins.

Rook versus Knight

More often than not drawn, but there are a few exceptions. Diagram 118 shows two drawing examples:

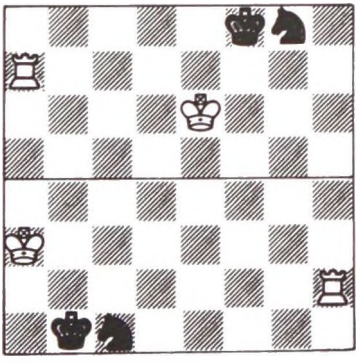


Diagram 118

In the bottom half of the diagram the draw is simple but play must be precise—1 Rb2+ Ka1 2 Rb8 (if 2 Rh2 Kb1 3 Rd2 Ka1 4 Kb4 Kb1 5 Kc3 Na2+! draws, but not 5 . . . Ka1? 6 Rd1 Kb1 7 Rh1 zugzwang) 2 . . . Ne2! (the only move and not all that obvious! 2 . . . Na2? 3 Kb3 Kb1 4 Rb7! Nc1+ 5 Kc3+ Ka1 6 Kc2 Na2 7 Rb1 is mate while 2 . . . Nd3? 3 Kb3 Nc1+ 4 Kc2 reaches the same end) 3 Kb3 Kb1! This time the black king is threatening to escape via c1. 4 Re8 Nc1+ 5 Kc3 Na2+ and Black gives perpetual check or gets his king off the back rank.

The case in the top half of the diagram is also drawn, but a bit more complicated—1 Rb7 Nh6 2 Rh7 Ng8! The knight must stay near his noble monarch. 3 Rf7+ Ke8 4 Rg7 Kf8! (forced, since 4 . . . Nh6 5 Rg6 wins the knight) 5 Rh7 Ke8 6 Rf7 Nh6 7 Rf1 Ng8 8 Ra1 Kf8 9 Ra7 and White has gone full circle without making progress.

That concludes this chapter on more complex endings, but it cannot be over-emphasized that the ambitious student must study these endings in greater depth if he is to tip the balance on those frequent half-points which are on the win/draw borderline.

7 General Advice

In this chapter we hope to cover a number of points which are not normally mentioned in the average instructional text. Since this book aims at helping the young ambitious player to improve his game, we shall consider some important ideas which are too often neglected.

HOW DO CHESS PLAYERS ANALYSE?

This question must have intrigued almost everyone who knows anything about chess. The novice often asks the strong player, 'how many moves do you "see" ahead?' Obviously there cannot be a standard reply because the answer will always depend on the nature of the position under consideration. Yet one would have thought that amid the hundreds of thousands of books written on chess (to which this is a new addition) there would exist a comprehensive study on the methods of analysing chess positions. Unfortunately, however, very few authors have attempted to tackle this highly complex topic, but one who should be mentioned is the Soviet Grandmaster Alexander Kotov. In his excellent book *Think Like a Grandmaster* he explains that naturally there are various ways of approaching an analysis of a given position. One important feature that does emerge from his exposition is that a logical approach to any position will generally give the best results. We shall, therefore, devote some space to what Kotov calls 'the tree of analysis' and the selection of candidate moves. For this purpose let us return to a position considered in Chapter 2 (see page 38):

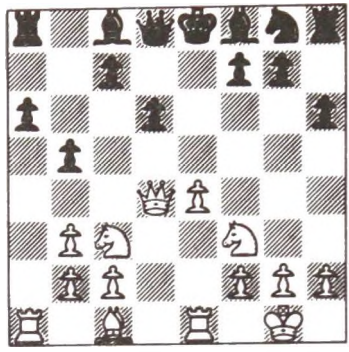


Diagram 119

Let us assume that a Master is confronted with this position for the first time and that he is to provide a fairly accurate and comprehensive analysis of this position, with Black to move.

His first observations would, needless to say, be general comments such as 'Black is way behind in development' (about 5 tempi) and 'White has good domination of the centre and is poised to attack': the material balance being level means that White has a clear advantage. This assessment procedure would take only a matter of seconds.

Next the Master would try to pinpoint weaknesses in Black's position in order to formulate some attacking plans for White. Black, for instance, has a weak and vulnerable pawn on b5, and weak squares on d5 and c6. Furthermore, Black's king in the centre is an obvious target. At this stage the Master would want to start analysing some concrete variations to back up his observations, and he would probably begin by mentally listing Black's different options in the diagrammed position. These moves are referred to as 'candidate moves', for it is one of these that Black will eventually choose to play. His thoughts could run as follows, 'Well, Black is threatened with the loss of his b-pawn by 11 Nxb5 so unless he is going to sacrifice a pawn he must take account of the threat. He could defend b5 with 10 . . . Rb8, 10 . . . c6 or 10 . . . Qd7, but none of those does much for his development. Black could try 10 . . . c5 counter-attacking White's queen, but that is anti-positional because it creates a weak pawn on d6 and a weak square on d5; what is more it doesn't solve the problem of the b-pawn. He could try 10 . . . Bd7; in fact any bishop move would do since the rook on a8 would then be guarded. So both 10 . . . Bb7 and 10 . . . Be6 come into consideration. Now what should I play in this situation? Well it strikes me that he is rather vulnerable

on the e-file with White intending a timely e5, so perhaps 10 . . . Be6 is most sensible, providing his king with some shelter on the file. Yes, that's what I think he will play, so let us start analysing the consequences of that move.'

The reader should realize that this internal dialogue helped the Master identify seven possible candidate moves, but he quickly chose one as the prime contender and was then going to delve into the ramifications of this move.

By continuing this type of dialogue with oneself it is possible to explore the intricacies of a position. Obviously some positions are easier to analyse and assess than others. The position given in our example is quite complicated and leads to the tree-diagram with many branches, shown on page 144.

If one takes into account that most of the analysis just considered arose from only one branch of our tree, we can see that the position was very complicated. Simpler examples with long forcing variations are easier to analyse, and Kotov refers to these as 'bare trunks'—for instance, Diagram 120:

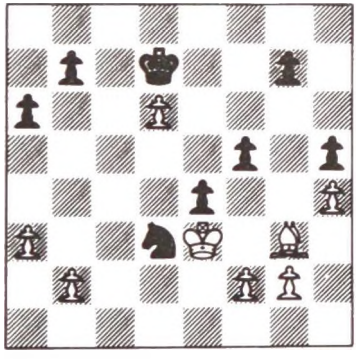
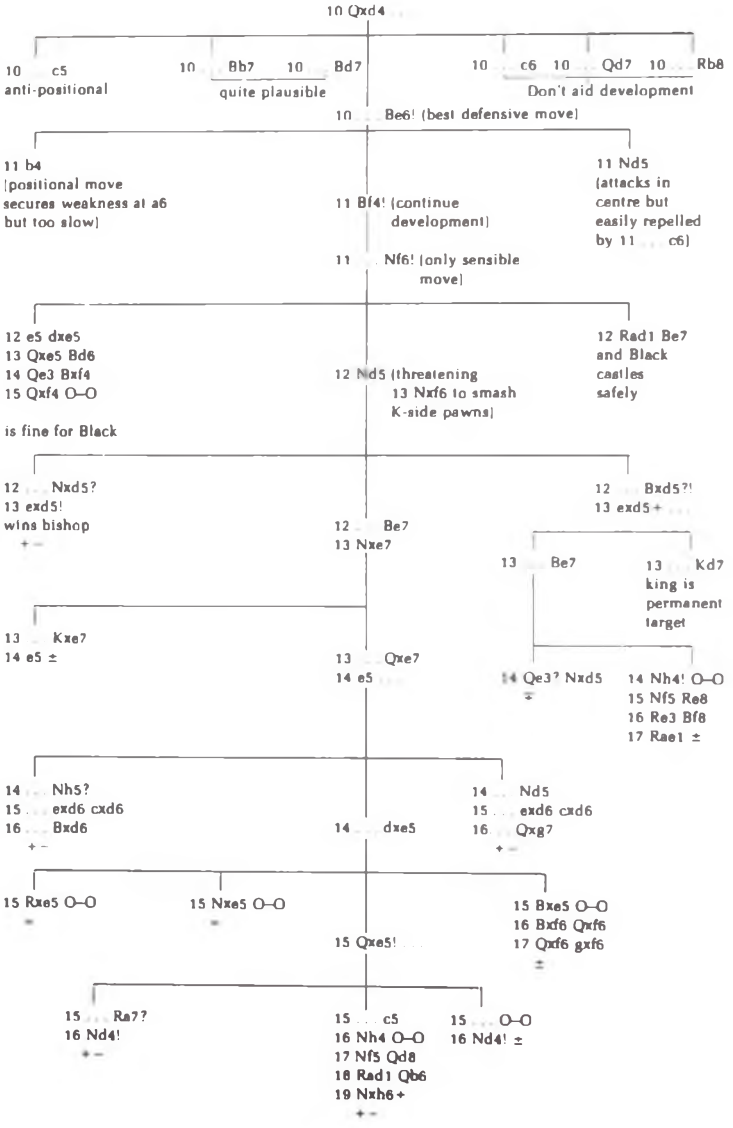


Diagram 120
R. E. Spurgeon–Povah
Paignton
1974

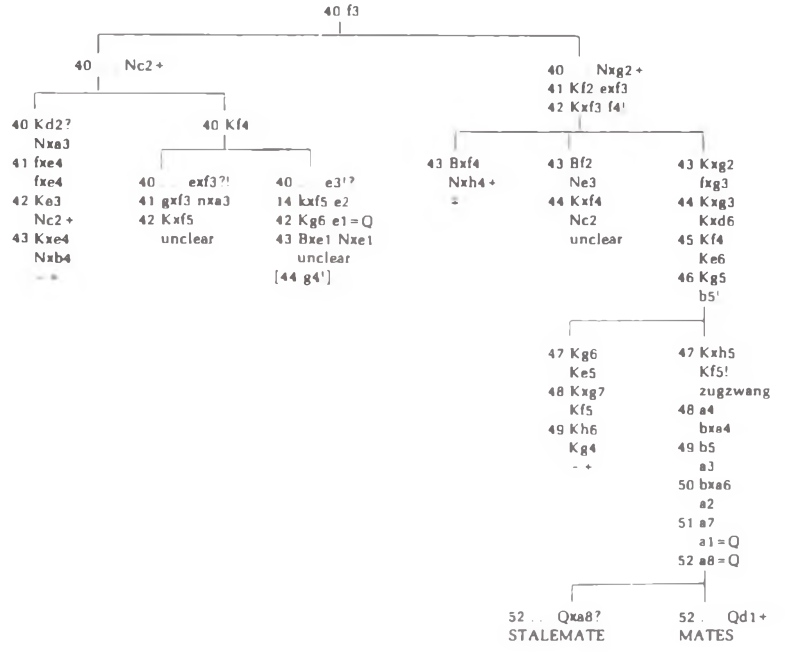
This position arose at move 38 in one of the author's games. The time-control had just been reached and adjournment was not far away. White continued 39 b4 and Black played 39 . . . Ne1! winning a pawn because of the twin threats of 40 . . . Nxg2+ and 40 . . . Nc2+. It is worth mentioning a useful tip here: if you are going to have to seal a move and you have a forced or relatively obvious move, then it often pays to seal that move. In this case I quickly played my 39th move supposing that it would make him think, when much to my surprise and embarrassment he played 40 f3, and I was asked to seal

Tree of analysis for position in Diagram 119



my next move. The problem was that I had the difficult choice between two equally attractive moves 40 . . . Nxg2+ or 40 . . . Nc2+.

Had I done the sensible thing I would have sealed 39 . . . Ne1 and then I could have analysed the two alternatives at move 40 during the adjournment. However, it was not to be and I settled down to analyse the position, to choose my sealed move, as follows:

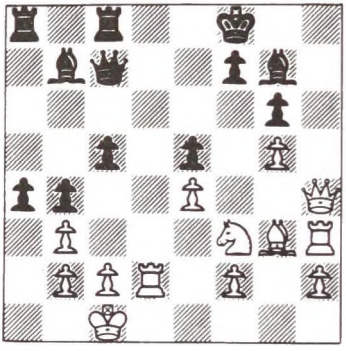


Because of the relative simplicity of the position I was able to analyse one variation 13 moves in depth. However, I did not have faith in my analysis and thought that one analytical error in the 40 . . . Nxg2+ variation could be very costly so I sealed the wrong move—namely 40 . . . Nc2+. Fortunately the story has a happy ending, for my opponent played the inferior 40 Kd2? and lost quite quickly; had he played 40 Kf4 and found 44 g4! which I had completely underestimated when sealing, he would have had very good chances of drawing at least! The moral to this story is to have faith in your own analysis, because if you don't—nobody else will!

If the keen student wishes to improve his analytical powers then he should make a point of studying Master games with good verbal annotations. Verbal assessments of positions will often give an observer greater insight into a position than any amount of detailed analysis. The reader is advised to consult some of the books recommended at the end of this chapter.

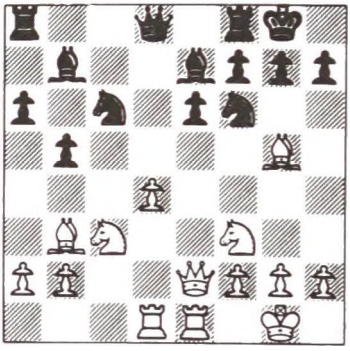
In order that the student might realize what is expected of him, here are a few exercises (answers to be found on page 168):

Diagram 121
Povah–Baljon
Wijk aan Zee III
1975



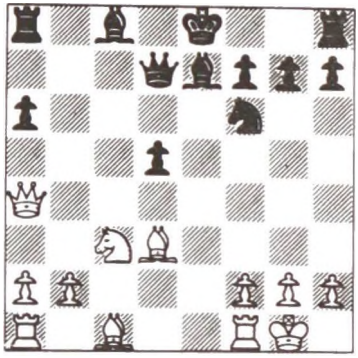
White played 28 Nxe5. Analyse the consequences of this move and draw the relevant tree-diagram.

Diagram 122
Boleslavsky–Kotov
Zurich Candidates
1953



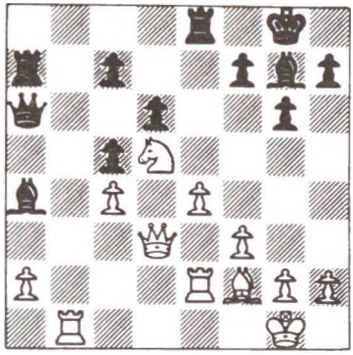
Assess this position—Black played 13 . . . Na5. Was this an error and should he have considered 13 . . . Nb4 or 13 . . . Nd5?

Diagram 123
Fischer–Petrosian
Candidates (7)
1971



Should White play 13 Bb5 or can he hope to profit from his advantages in some other fashion?

Diagram 124
Teichmann–Bernstein
St Petersburg
1909



What positional advantages does White enjoy, and how can he exploit them to the full?

ANNOTATING CHESS GAMES

This is an exercise which is sadly neglected by too many players. Botvinnik was an avid enthusiast for the annotation of games. He used to write detailed notes on most of his games and claimed that this was one of the most effective methods of improving one's play.

The author, while not claiming to do detailed annotations of his games, does keep a thorough record of all the games he has played, most of which have light notes. Such a practice has several advantages (a) good cross-referencing enables one to improve opening play; (b) one becomes familiar with certain middle game positions and how to handle them; (c) it becomes easier to prepare for opponents whom one meets regularly.

As an exercise we give the following game score without comment, and the reader is advised to write notes on the game and then compare them with those given in the annotated version. You should time yourself on this task, spending no less than half an hour and ideally about one hour.

N. E. Povah–J. Sanz (Spain), Charlton, 1979

1	e4	e5	21	Bh4	f4
2	Nf3	Nc6	22	Nd5	f3
3	Bb5	Nge7	23	g3	Rf8
4	Nc3	Ng6	24	b3	Nc6
5	d4	exd4	25	Qd2	Qxe4
6	Nxd4	Bc5	26	Rhe1	Qf5
7	Be3	Bxd4	27	Qc3	Nce5
8	Bxd4	O–O	28	Rd2	Rd7
9	Be3	d6	29	Kb2	b6
10	h4	f5	30	Ne7	Qf7
11	Qd5+	Kh8	31	Nc6	Qg7
12	Bg5	Qe8	32	Nd4	Rg8
13	h5	Nge5	33	Re4	c5
14	h6	gxh6	34	Nf5	Qg6
15	Bxh6	Rf7	35	Nxd6	Rf8
16	O–O–O	Ng4	36	Rxe5	Nxe5
17	Bc4	Nce5		Black lost	
18	Qd4	Be6		on time	
19	Bxe6	Qxe6			
20	Bg5	Rg7			

When you have completed your annotations turn over and compare your notes with those of the author.

N. E. Povah–J. Sanz, Charlton, 1979

1 e4 e5
2 Nf3 Nc6
3 Bb5 Nge7

An unusual third move in the Ruy Lopez. Its main advantage is its surprise value.

4 Nc3

4 O–O is also possible, but 4 d4 exd4 5 Nxd4 Nxd4 6 Qxd4 Nc6 justifies Black's strategy.

4 . . . Ng6

4 . . . g6 is a common idea in this variation, but here it is decidedly dangerous, e.g. 5 d4 Bg7 (5 . . . exd4 6 Nd5 Nxd5 7 exd5 Qe7+ 8 Kf1

Ne5 9 Qxd4 f6 10 Bf4 Bg7 11 Re1 ± P. Johner Tartakover, Karlovy Vary 1911.) 6 Bg5! h6 7 Be3 exd4 8 Nxd4 O–O 9 Qd2 intending O–O–O with the advantage.

5 d4 exd4
6 Nxd4 Bc5

White's play up to here has been very natural, but now comes the problem of how to continue and what plan to adopt. I wanted to castle on the queen side so that I could launch my king-side pawns in an assault on his king (I expected him to castle short). So play continued—

7 Be3 Bxd4
8 Bxd4 O–O

If 8 . . . Nxd4 9 Qxd4 O–O then White stands better due to his freer development.

9 Be3

White retains the two bishops.

9 . . . d6
10 h4!?

A provocative move: White foresees that Black intends . . . f5, so he launches his king-side advance immediately.

Theory mentions the game Barczay–Sydor, Lublin 1969: 10 O–O Kh8 11 Qd2 f5 12 f4 fxe4 13 Nxe4 Qe7 14 Ng3 ±.

10 . . . f5

Not 10 . . . Nxh4? 11 Qh5 Nxg2+ 12 Kd2! h6 13 Bxh6 with a crushing attack.

11 Qd5+

This queen check enables White to castle quickly.

11 . . . Kh8
12 Bg5

Now the bishop will not be disturbed by . . . f4.

12 . . . Qe8
13 h5 Nge5

13 . . . Nge7 is also possible, but 14 Qd2 followed by O–O–O leaves White well placed.

14 h6! gxh6

Not the tempting 14 . . . g6? keeping the h-file closed, but allowing 15 f4! Ng4 16 Bxc6 bxc6 17 Qd4+ +–

15 Bxh6

15 Rxh6 is answered by the annoying 15 . . . Ng4.

15 . . . Rf7

Not 15 . . . Rg8? because of the sequence 16 f4 Nf7 17 Bxc6 bxc6 18 Qd4+ again.

16 O–O–O?!

Castling for the sake of it! It is true that early castling is wise, but one should only castle when there is no better move, and here 16 f3 preventing . . . Ng4 was to be preferred.

16 . . . Ng4!

An annoying move threatening both . . . Nxf2 and . . . Nxh6.

17 Bc4?!

This doesn't help, better was 17 f3! Nxh6 (not 17 . . . Nf2? 18 Bxc6 bxc6 19 Qd4+ winning the knight) 18 Rxh6 when Black's exposed king guarantees White a lasting initiative.

17 . . . Nce5
18 Qd4 Be6

Black now starts to gain the initiative.

19 Bxe6 Qxe6
20 Bg5 Rg7
21 Bh4 f4!

This secures the e5 square for Black's knight.

22 Nd5

White hopes to play 23 f3, repelling one of the frisky horses, but he doesn't want to allow 22 . . . Ne3. But now Black gets there first—

22 . . . f3!
23 g3

Not 22 gxf3? Nxf3 followed by 23 . . . Qh6+ and 24 . . . Nxh4 – +

23 . . . Rf8
24 b3?!

Missing the point of Black's last move, which was to guard the f6 square. White should protect his f2 pawn with 24 Rd2 when chances are about level.

24 . . . Nc6
25 Qd2

White must lose a pawn and the f-pawn is more important.

25 . . . Qxe4
26 Rhe1

Fortunately White now gains active play for his pieces to compensate for his pawn deficit.

26 . . . Qf5
27 Qc3

White's main chances are based on his control of the dark squares—particularly the a1–h8 diagonal. Black cannot grab the f-pawn, e.g. 27 . . . Nxf2? 28 Bf6! Rxf6 29 Nxf6 threatening 30 Re8+

27 . . . Nce5
28 Rd2 Rd7

Black is running short of time and the position is difficult for him. Perhaps he should try to force the issue with 28 . . . c6 although this leaves the d6 pawn vulnerable.

29 Kb2 b6

White's last move was played simply to make Black think and to rush him into an error—the clock plays its part!

30 Ne7 Qf7
31 Nc6 Qg7
32 Nd4!

Not 32 Nxa7? c6! and the knight is lost. Now White's knight has a lovely choice of squares.

32 . . . Rg8
33 Re4!

Another White piece comes into the attack, and combinational possibilities begin to arise.

33 . . . c5?

This loses as it weakens the d6-pawn, but it is difficult to find constructive moves for Black anyway.

34 Nf5 Qg6

Better was 34 . . . Qf8 35 Nxd6! Rxd6 36 Rxg4 Rd4! (36 . . . Rxd2 37 Qxe5+ Rg7 38 Rxg7 Qxg7 39 Bf6 +– or 36 . . . Rxg4 37 Qxe5+ Qg7 38 Qxg7+ Kxg7 39 Rxd6 +–) 37 Rdxd4! cxd4 38 Rxg8+ Kxg8 39 Qxd4 ±.

35 Nxd6?

Missing the most accurate win by 35 Rxg4! Qxf5 (35 . . . Qxg4 36 Bf6+ Rgg7 37 Bxg7+ wins material) 36 Rf4! followed by Bf6+ winning the exchange.

35 . . . Rf8?

Black's best hope was 35 . . . Rxd6! 36 Rxe5! Rd4 (not 36 . . . Nxe5? 37 Qxe5+ +– or 36 . . . Rxd2 37 Rg5+ Qf6 38 Rxg8+ Kxg8 39 Bxf6 +–) 37 Rxd4 cxd4 (37 . . . Nxe5 38 Rd5 wins the knight) 38 Qxd4 Qg7 (38 . . . Nxe5? 39 Qxe5+ Rg7 40 Bf6 and White reaches a won king and pawn ending) 39 Re4 Qxd4 40 Rxd4 h6 (40 . . . Nxf2?? 41 Bf6+ Rg7 42 Rd8 mate) 41 Rd2 Re8! 42 Kc3 Re2 43 Rxe2 fxe2 44 Kd2 Nxf2 45 Kxe2 with an ending which should be won for White, but Black is not without hope.

36 Rxe5 Nxe5

and Black lost on time; however he was clearly worse as the following line shows: 37 Qxe5+ Qg7 38 Qxg7+ Rxg7 (not 38 . . . Kxg7? 39 Nf5+ +–) 39 Ne4 ± White's two minor pieces are far superior to the rook, and Black's f-pawn will soon fall, e.g. 39 . . . Rgf7 40 Bg5 followed by Bf4, Ng5 and Nxf3 +–.

It is hoped that the keen student will adopt the habit of annotating most of his games as thoroughly as possible, for the dividends should be high.

LEARNING TO HANDLE A CHESS CLOCK

It is very important that an ambitious player learns how to handle the chess clock in the most professional fashion. Alekhine emphasized this fact by saying that time trouble is as little justification for a blunder 'as the claim by a law-breaker that he was drunk at the time of the offence'. He continued, 'the inability of an experienced Master to cope with his clock must be regarded as just as serious a fault as an oversight'.

So how should a player cope with time trouble? Well, first he should naturally try to avoid it by not squandering so much of his time—a crime of which many players are guilty. This goal can be achieved in several steps: (a) adopt a more professional approach, do not spend so much time wandering around the room when your opponent is thinking, but use that time to analyse the position and to make general assessments and formulate plans; (b) improve your analytical skills so that you don't repeatedly analyse the same variations, thereby wasting valuable time; (c) good opening preparations will also save time as well as increasing the pressure on the opponent.

If despite these guidelines you still run into time trouble, then you must train yourself to be able to think quickly but *calmly*. It is very important that you look calm when in time trouble for this has an unsettling effect upon many opponents who expect you to be flustered. Botvinnik advises the use of training games with very little clock time, in which the aim is to make good use of your time rather than worry about the quality of the moves played. Repeated practice enables the 'clock-sinner' to improve both his attitude and analytical skills under time pressure.

One practice which should be avoided is moving swiftly to keep the opponent in time trouble. This simply makes the game a lottery and the first player to blunder usually loses. Why should you take such risks if you have more time? However, one time-trouble practice that often does work is to analyse long and complicated sequences of moves in advance and then to rattle them off quickly. The advantage of this technique is that your opponent cannot possibly analyse the position to the same degree of depth as you, especially as he does not know which first move you are considering.

Finally there are occasions when time trouble can provide a player with his salvation. Usually this arises when you are clearly worse but your opponent is running short of time, so you should seek an opportunity to complicate the issue, and these attempts sometimes border on desperation! Consider this example:

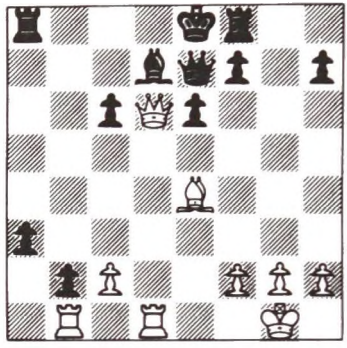


Diagram 125
P. G. Wann–Povah
London
1979

Black's pawns on b2 and a3 gave him a winning initiative, but White was not dead yet and he played 23 Qxc6! With both players short of time this move came as a nasty shock, and it should have been enough for at least a draw. Play continued—23 . . . Bxc6?! 24 Bxc6+ Qd7 25 Rxd7 Ra6 (not 25 . . . a2?? 26 Ra7+ +−) 26 Rc7+?? (Black had accepted the proffered queen on move 23, having expected 26 Bb5! and intending the blunder 26 . . . a2? because 27 Ra7+? Kd8 28 Rd1+ Rd6! 29 Rxd6+ Kc8 30 Ba6+ Kb8 31 Rb7+ Ka8 wins for Black, but 27 Rdd1+! Ke7 28 Bxa6 axb1=Q 29 Rxb1 Ra8 30 Bd3 Ra1 31 c3 wins for White! However Black has chances of a draw with 26 . . . Ra5! 27 Rb7+ Rxb5 28 Rxb5 a2 29 R5xb2 axb1=Q+ 30 Rxb1 Kd7 with a technically difficult win for White.) 26 . . . Rxc6 27 Rxc6 a2 28 resigns.

In the next example Kotov has a hopeless position against Reshevsky, so he tries a sensible gamble in his opponent's chronic time trouble:

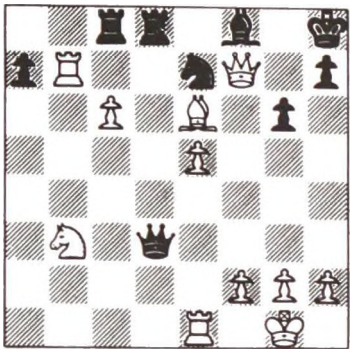


Diagram 126
Reshevsky–Kotov
Zurich Candidates
1953

Kotov played 34 . . . Qe2 and Reshevsky glanced anxiously at his clock and fortunately found 35 Qxf8+! (had he played 35 Rf1 then 35 . . . Rd1 36 Nd2 Qxd2 37 Bc4 Rxf1+ 38 Bxf1 Qg5 would allow Black to stave off White's immediate threats) 35 . . . Rxf8 36 Rxe2 and Reshevsky made the time control and won. Although Kotov's gamble failed, it was undoubtedly his best try and quite justifiable under the circumstances.

HOW TO IMPROVE

How does the young ambitious player gain the necessary experience to enable him to aspire to his desired level of success? Basically there are two methods of improving one's game—playing and studying. But it is not adequate to just play hundreds of games—the playing conditions need to be stringent and the opposition should be of reasonable quality, so the following factors should be taken into account and sensible ratios must be determined:

1. Quantity and quality of opposition
2. Tournament Chess
3. Study time

1. Quantity and Quality of Opposition

It is very important that the student strikes up a good balance between time spent playing and studying. The author found that he

was quite capable of playing about seventy competitive games (games played with a chess-clock for school, club and county teams) a year from the age of fourteen through to the early twenties, when he increased his activity to an average of about 120 games a year. The serious student should consider this figure of seventy games as a fairly good target and he should certainly aim to play at least fifty games a year; there are very few top class players who have managed to make it to the top with a lower average.

By playing at least ten match games a season, a player will also get a published BCF (British Chess Federation) or ELO/USCF rating which will be revised annually. The following chart gives a rough indication of various playing levels:

BCF	ELO/USCF	Standard
up to 100	up to 1400	Beginner
100–125	1400–1600	Low club strength
125–150	1600–1800	Average club strength
150–175	1800–2000	High club strength
175–200	2000–2200	County strength
200–225	2200–2400	National Expert and Master levels
225–245	2400–2500	International Master strength
245 +	2500 +	International Grandmaster strength

One of the big problems for the fast-improving youngster is to find good-quality opposition. It is well known that one generally benefits most of all from playing people slightly stronger than oneself.

In many instances the junior player is prevented from meeting such opposition, either because he is played on a very low board in team events or because he tends to play opponents of his own age (i.e. school matches and junior events). These problems can easily be overcome if the youngster is ambitious enough and chooses his tournaments carefully—for instance, Tony Miles, Britain's first Grandmaster, played in and won the British Under-21 Championship when he was only fifteen! Much the same was true of Nigel Short, who gained valuable experience in the British Championship when he was only twelve. There is nothing to stop many youngsters, who have experienced a measured degree of success at a given age group, from playing in older sections. Similarly, a player should strive to push himself to higher grading limits. There are many tournaments nowadays which incorporate graded sections, such as a major tournament limited to players under about 160, or a minor

tournament limited to players under about 130. A player graded at 125, who has played in several minor sections with reasonable results, should consider moving up into major sections as soon as he feels ready to do so. The principle is to stretch yourself to the limit, and gradually you will alter your horizons!

2. Tournament Chess

Tournament chess offers many players the most effective method of gaining competitive experience and, with the British tournament scene being the envy of Europe, there are plenty of opportunities for the keen enthusiast to improve. One problem that does arise is that of finding details about tournaments. Until one gets on the tournament circuit mailing list, the best solution to the problem is to enquire at your local chess club or to consult the 'Forthcoming Events' sections in chess magazines—*Chess*, *British Chess Magazine* or the BCF's monthly publication *Chess Moves*—and on Channel 4 teletext.

As mentioned earlier, it is important to choose one's tournaments carefully so as to get the maximum benefit from the experience. There are literally dozens of week-end 'Swiss' tournaments throughout Britain now and these gruelling events, which usually last six rounds (one round Friday night, three rounds Saturday and two Sunday), have been largely responsible for the rapid improvement in British chess over the past 25 years.

Nowadays, there are also one-day 'rapidplay' tournaments taking place on most weekends around the country. The format for these events is usually five or six rounds with each player having 30 minutes for all their moves. Rapidplay chess is a very useful means of sharpening one's play and is now so popular in the UK that separate rapidplay grades are published twice a year.

The keen enthusiast would be well advised to try and play in a selection of these events and, if he does, he may find the following tips useful:

(a) 'Swiss' tournaments invariably have fast time controls usually followed by 'blitz finishes' hence it pays to play fairly quickly conserving time for the latter stages. Of course, good use of your time is even more important in rapidplay events.

(b) Attacking play should be favoured since it is more difficult to find the most accurate defences with fast time-controls. It is even worth sacrificing a pawn for nebulous attacking chances—a dangerous practice at the slower international time-control of 40 moves in two hours. Avoid short draws!

(c) The large number of entrants in the 'Swiss' events normally ensures that at least 5 points out of 6 are needed for a winning score; so do not give up if you lose an early game, for 5 points usually wins a prize!

3. Study Time

Throughout this book the student has been encouraged to spend as much time studying as he possibly can. It should be quite possible for most enthusiasts to put in at least three to four hours of study a week; some may even try to emulate Fischer who literally worked like a Trojan. Bisguier said of Fischer, 'what was important was that he was playing a tremendous amount of chess and learning and improving all the time. He devoured all the chess books he could get his hands on and was slowly but surely assimilating this knowledge, utilizing what he could make use of immediately and storing the rest for future reference, like a squirrel eating enough nuts to assuage his hunger and hoarding the remainder for later needs.'

No matter how much time a player spends studying, the important thing is that his time is well spent. As already mentioned, most players concentrate on developing an effective opening repertoire, but the best method of improving play must be the study of complete games. By playing through games with good notes the student is able to see how the Master's ideas develop and how they are carried through to their conclusion. In this way the student not only learns his openings, but he relates them to certain middle game themes, and on some occasions he will learn how to handle particular endings.

We conclude this chapter with three games played by junior players who certainly have made the grade.

The first, played when Fischer was only thirteen, has been heralded by many as 'the game of the century'!

D. Byrne–R. J. Fischer, Rosenwald Tournament, 1956

1 Nf3 Nf6
2 c4 g6
3 Nc3 Bg7
4 d4 O–O
5 Bf4 d5

The Grunfeld defence—Fischer's great favourite.

6 Qb3 dxc4
7 Qxc4 c6
8 e4 Nbd7

Bisguier–Benko, US Championship 1963/4, went 8 . . . b5 9 Qd3 Qa5 10 Be2 b4 11 Nd1 c5 12 O–O Ba6 with good prospects for Black.

9 Rd1

Fischer refutes 9 e5 as follows—9 . . . Nd5! 10 Nxd5 cxd5 11 Qxd5 Nxe5! – +.

9 . . . Nb6
10 Qc5

Provocative! 10 Qb3 was more prudent.

10 . . . Bg4
11 Bg5?

This error, moving a piece for the second time before completing his development, allows Fischer to start some fireworks. 11 Be2 followed by O–O was natural and best.

11 . . . Na4!
12 Qa3

If 12 Nxa4 then Black regains his material with interest, e.g. 12 . . . Nxe4 13 Qc1 Qa5+ 14 Nc3 Bxf3 ∓ or 13 Bxe7 Nxc5 14 Bxd8 Nxa4 – + or 13 Qxe7 Qxe7 14 Bxe7 Rfe8 15 Be2 Rxe7 16 O–O b5 winning a piece or 13 Qb4 Nxg5! 14 Nxg5 Bxd1 15 Kxd1 Bxd4 16 Qd2 Bxf2 ∓.

12 . . . Nxc3
13 bxc3 Nxe4

Sacrificing the exchange but opening the e-file.

14 Bxe7 Qb6!
15 Bc4

Not 15 Bxf8 Bxf8 16 Qb3 Nxc3! 17 Qxb6 axb6 18 Ra1 Re8+ with a winning attack—Fischer.

15 . . . Nxc3
16 Bc5

16 Qxc3 Rfe8 would allow Black to regain his piece with an extra pawn.

16 Rfe8+
17 Kf1

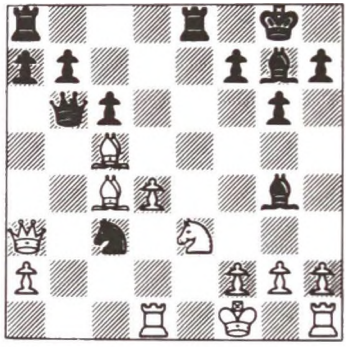


Diagram 127
D. Byrne–R. J. Fischer
Rosenwald Tournament
1956

Here Byrne must have expected 17 . . . Nb5 when 18 Bxf7 + would give him the advantage, but Fischer comes up with a real gem!

17 . . . Be6!!

'. . . a stunning masterpiece of combination play . . .' Hans Kmoch

18 Bxb6

The alternatives are no better:
(a) 18 Bxe6 Qb5+ 19 Kg1 Ne2+ 20 Kf1 Ng3+ 21 Kg1 Qf1+ 22 Rxf1 Ne2 mate.
(b) 18 Qxc3 Qxc5! ∓
(c) 18 Re1 Nb5 ∓

18 . . . Bxc4+
19 Kg1 Ne2+
20 Kf1 Nxd4+
21 Kg1

If 21 Rd3 axb6 22 Qc3 Nxf3! – +

21 . . . Ne2+
22 Kf1 Nc3+
23 Kg1 axb6
24 Qb4

If 24 Qd6 Nxd1 25 Qxd1 Rxa2 intending . . . Ra1.

24 . . . Ra4!
25 Qxb6 Nxd1

Black's material advantage is decisive and the rest is a massacre **26 h3 Rxa2 27 Kh2 Nxf2 28 Re1 Rxe1 29 Qd8+ Bf8 30 Nxe1 Bd5 31 Nf3 Ne4 32 Qb8 b5 33 h4 h5 34 Ne5 Kg7 35 Kg1 Bc5+ 36 Kf1 Ng3+ 37 Ke1 Bb4+ 38 Kd1 Bb3+ 39 Kc1 Ne2 + 40 Kb1 Nc3 + 41 Kc1 Rc2 mate.**

In recent years Garry Kasparov has dominated the world chess scene and he is now the holder of the world record chess rating. This victory by the fifteen-year-old Kasparov in the Soviet championship, over one of the world's leading Grandmasters, should have sounded an early warning to his rivals.

1 e4 c5
2 Nf3 e6

Polugayevsky is a leading exponent of the Sicilian Defence, but his name is more commonly associated with the Najdorf variation 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6, etc.

3 d4 cxd4
4 Nxd4 a6
5 Nc3

This rather natural move has been overshadowed in the last few years by either 5 Bd3 or 5 c4.

5 . . . Qc7
6 Be2 b5

Black wishes to mobilize his queen side rapidly, but he is behind in development and Kasparov is quick to take advantage of this fact.

7 Bf3 Bb7
8 O–O Nc6

Boleslavsky–Getman, USSR 1965, went 8 . . . d6 9 a4 b4 10 Na2 Nf6 11 Re1 e5 12 Nf5 g6 13 Bg5 Nbd7 14 Nh6 Qb6 15 c3 ±.

9 Nxc6 dxc6

9 . . . Bxc6 would allow White to play 10 Re1 with threats of Nd5.

10 e5!?

This was a new move which Kasparov had probably prepared at home; the pawn sacrifice is quite logical since White must open up the position to utilize his lead in development.

10 . . . Qxe5

Polugayevsky can hardly decline the offer, otherwise the pawn on e5 would gradually cripple his game by controlling two useful squares f6 and d6.

11 Re1 Qc7
12 Bh5

A very strange-looking move with a threat of Rxe6. Presumably Kasparov got the idea from some earlier games where the idea was tried in another setting, e.g. Stein–Gipslis, USSR 1965.

12 . . . Be7

Polugayevsky probably assumed that Kasparov could not capture on e6 because of the reply 13 . . . g6, but

13 Rxe6! g6

The alternative is 13 . . . Nf6 when Kasparov could have played 14 Ne4 with great complications thus:
(a) 14 . . . Nxe4 15 Rxe4 when White's lead in development gives him the advantage.
(b) 14 . . . O–O? is obviously dangerous, e.g. 15 Nxf6+ Bxf6 16 Rxf6 gxf6 17 Bh6 ± since White regains the exchange with the initiative.
(c) 14 . . . Nxh5 15 Qxh5 and now:
(i) 15 . . . O–O–O 16 Bf4 Qxf4 17 Rxe7 ±
(ii) 15 . . . g6? 16 Nf6+ Kd8 17 Qd1+ Kc8 18 Bf4 + –
(iii) 15 . . . O–O! 16 Qe5 Qxe5 17 Rxe5 with equality.
This is the variation Polugayevsky should have chosen, but he probably missed Kasparov's next move when choosing to play as he did.

14 Re1!

The obvious try 14 Qd4 is inadequate, e.g. 14 . . . fxe6 15 Bf4 (15 Qxh8? O–O–O! threatening both 16 . . . gxh5 and 16 . . . Bf6) 15 . . . e5! 16 Bxe5 Qd8! 17 Qe4 gxh5 18 Bxh8 Qd7 ∓.

14 . . . Rd8?!

Polugayevsky declines the sacrifice presumably because of the self-assured manner of the young Kasparov. We cannot be sure of how much analysis Kasparov had done at home, but the ability to play one's moves quickly and confidently is of great importance in such situations. A victory for home analysis?

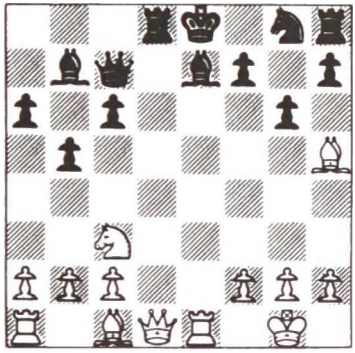


Diagram 128
G. Kasparov–L. Polugayevsky 46th USSR Championship 1978

If Polugayevsky had accepted the proffered bishop 14 . . . gxh5 then play might have continued—15 Qd4! f6 16 Bf4 when White's lead in development and Black's unco-ordinated position offer Kasparov good attacking chances, e.g. 16 . . . Rd8 17 Qe3 Qc8 18 Qc5! maintaining pressure against e7, blockading Black's c-pawn and eyeing up the h5 pawn. The reader is advised to examine this position for himself to see if he can find adequate attacking chances for White against attempted defences such as 18 . . . Kf8, 18 . . . Kf7 or 18 . . . Rd7.

15 Qf3 c5

The bishop is even more poisonous now 15 . . . gxh5 16 Bf4 Qd7 17 Qxh5 with a very powerful attack due to threats such as Be5, Rad1, Ne4, etc.

16 Bf4 Qb6

The exchange of queens does not help Black—16 . . . Bxf3 17 Bxc7

Bxh5 18 Bxd8 Kxd8 19 f3 g5 20 Rad1 + Ke8 (20 . . . Kc8 21 Nd5 Bd6 22 Re8 + when Black will never be able to untie himself) 21 Nd5 h6 22 Rd3 Rh7 (22 . . . Kf8 23 Nxe7 + −) 23 Rxe7 +! Nxe7 24 Nf6 + Kf8 25 Nxh5! when Black's pieces are in no position to defend his queenside pawns.

17 Qg3 gxh5
18 Bc7 Qg6
19 Bxd8 Qxg3
20 hxg3 Kxd8
21 Rad1 + Kc7
22 Nd5 + Bxd5
23 Rxd5

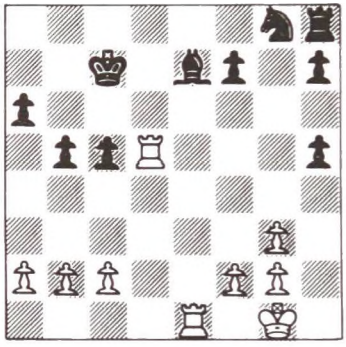


Diagram 129
Kasparov–Polugayevsky

An ending has been reached where Black has a bishop and knight for rook and pawn. This material balance would normally favour Black (particularly so in a middle game), but in this case Black's pieces are poorly co-ordinated, as bishop moves would allow the annoying pin Re8 and the knight must defend the bishop, so development is painful!

23 . . . h6
24 Rxh5 Rh7
25 Rhe5 Kd7
26 R5e3 Rg7
27 Rd3 + Kc7
28 Ra3 Rg6
29 Rf3 Bf6

Bellin in his notes to the game cites 29 . . . Bf6? as a decisive blunder,

saying that 29 . . . Rg7 would make it difficult for White to better his position.

30 c3 Kd7
31 Rd3+ Kc7
32 Re8 Ne7

This loses the f-pawn, but it is difficult to find constructive moves for Black, e.g. 32 . . . Be7 allows 33 Ra8 when Black hardly has a decent move.

33 Red8 Nc6
34 R8d7+ Kb6
35 Rxf7

Now that the f-pawn has fallen Kasparov is well on the way to victory—**35 . . . Be7 36 Re3 Bd6 37 f4 c4 38 Kh2 Bc5 39 Re2 b4 40 Re4 bxc3 41 bxc3 Bf2 42 Rxc4 Bxg3 +43 Kh3 Be1 44 a4 Na5 45 Rb4 +Kc5? 46 Rf5 + resigns.**

Black loses his knight, but even after 45 . . . Kc6 he would be struggling to restrain White's f-pawn. Although this game is not as spectacular as Fischer's classic victory over Byrne, it is still a remarkable achievement for the young Kasparov to play with such maturity and to overwhelm such a formidable opponent as Polugayevsky.

Finally, a game played by another of Britain's leading Grandmasters, Julian Hodgson. This game caused quite a sensation when it was played, for it was a victory which helped Julian (who was only fifteen at the time) to score an amazing $2\frac{1}{2}$ points from three consecutive games against Grandmasters. The game was annotated by Julian especially for this book.

J. M. Hodgson–J. D. M. Nunn, Aaronson Open, 1978

1 e4 c5
2 f4

'After the game I found that my opponent had never played against this line before.'

[Britain's fourth Grandmaster John Nunn, was a relatively new advocate of the Sicilian at that time, hence it is not too surprising that he should be caught out by this unusual variation. (—Author.)]

2 . . . Nc6
3 Nf3 g6

'3 . . . e6 is also a possibility, but it is not so sharp.'

4 Nc3 Bg7

'If 4 . . . e6 then 5 d4 gives White the advantage.'

5 Bc4 d6

'Here my opponent chooses a move which I think is not as good as 5 . . . e6, for if Black manages to play . . . d5 then he has at least equalized.'

6 O–O Nf6
7 d3 O–O
8 f5?!

'White should play 8 Qe1 and Qh4 before f5.'

8 . . . gxf5

'Black must accept the pawn sacrifice, otherwise his queen-side pieces will be blocked in.'

9 Qe1 fxe4
10 dxe4 Bg4
11 Qh4 Bxf3?

'Here—as was later pointed out by Jonathan Kinlay—Black should play 11 . . . Bh5 and . . . Bg6 with a very solid defensive position.'

12 Rxf3 Ne5
13 Rh3!

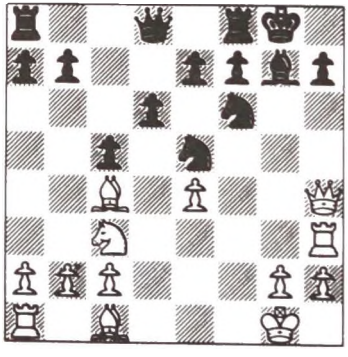


Diagram 130
J. M. Hodgson–J. D. M. Nunn Aaronson Open 1978

13 . . . Ng6

'After 13 . . . Nxc4 14 Nd5 White has a winning attack.' [If Black tries to escape with 14 . . . Re8 then 15 Bh6! appears decisive. (—Author.)]

14 Qg3 Qd7
15 Nd5!

'To prevent 15 . . . Qg4.'

15 . . . Nxd5

'If 15 . . . Nxe4 then 16 Qf3 Nf6 17 Nxf6 + Bxf6 18 Qh5 with a crushing attack.'

16 Bxd5 e6
17 Bb3 d5
18 Qf3!

'White threatens both 19 exd5 and 19 Qh5.'

18 . . . c4
19 Ba4! Qxa4?

'Black's only chance was 19 . . . Qe7 20 Qh5 Bd4+ 21 Kh1 when he has either . . . f6 or . . . f5. If 21 . . . f6 22 c3 Be5 23 exd5 exd5 24 Bc2 gives White a strong attack. However 21 . . . f5 is not so clear; possibly 22 Bg5 Bf6 23 exf5 exf5 24 Bh6 Bg7 25 c3 with a difficult position for both sides.'

20 Qh5 Rfd8
21 Qxh7+ Kf8
22 Bh6 Bxh6
23 Rxh6!

'White will soon have queen and two rooks against Black's king with the black major pieces out of play.'

23 . . . Ke8

'Already White was threatening 24 Rxg6 followed by 25 Rf1 + and 26 Qf7 mate.'

24 Rf1 Rd7
25 Qg8+!

'Not 25 Rxg6? fxg6 26 Qh8 + Ke7 27 Qxa8 Qxc2 when it is Black who has the advantage.'

25 . . . Nf8
26 Rxe6+! Kd8

[Not 26 . . . Re7? 27 Qxf7+ winning. (—Author.)]

27 Qxf8+ Kc7
28 Qc5+ Kd8
29 Rh6 resigns.

'Black cannot prevent Mate.'

Diagram 121 **Solution to Exercises on page 146**

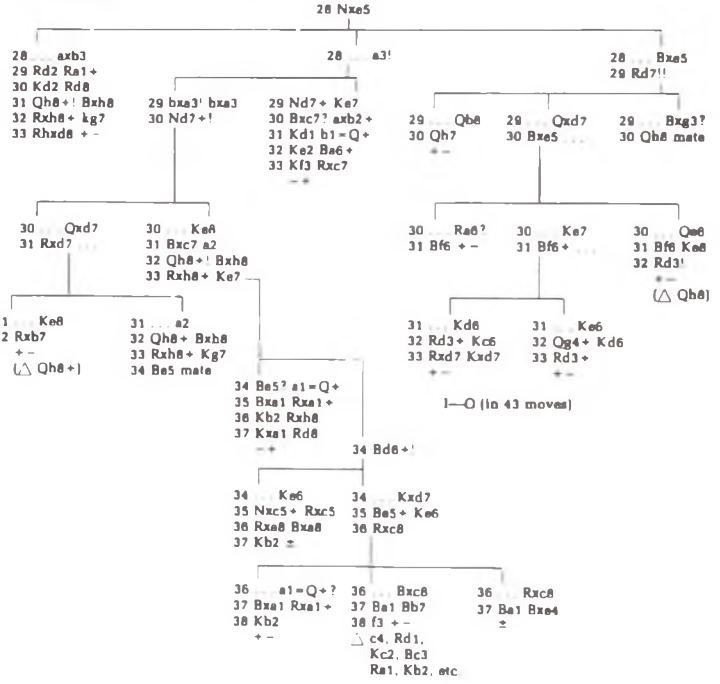


Diagram 122

In this typical Queen's Gambit Accepted position White has his normal pressure down the e-file and particularly against the e6 square. Bronstein points out in his classic book on the tournament (see Recommended Reading, page 170) that White has, in effect, a lead of three tempi—both rooks are well placed and his white-squared bishop is on a good diagonal. Kotov played 13 . . . Na5 which was branded an error by most commentators because of Boleslavsky's forceful play—14 d5! Nxb3 (obviously capturing on d5 loses a piece) 15 dxe6 Qb6 (15 . . . Bxf3 16 exf7+ Kh8 17 Rxd8 Bxe2 18 Rxa8 Rxa8 19 Rxe2 allows White to regain his piece with two extra pawns) 16 axb3 fxe6 17 Nd4! +– Bd6 18 Qxe6+ Kh8 19 Nf3 Rad8 20 Bf4! Bxf3 (20 . . . Rfe8 21 Rxd6 Rxe6 22 Rxb6 Rxb6 23 Be7 leaves White better placed) 21 Rxd6 Rxd6 22 Qxd6 Qxd6 23 Bxd6 Re8 24 Rxe8+ Nxe8 25 Be5 with an easily won ending 1–0 (42).

After the game Stahlberg and Euwe recommended 13 . . . Nb4, but some years later Rauzer demonstrated that 14 d5 Nbxd5 15 Nxd5 Bxd5 16 Bxd5 Nxd5 17 Bxe7 Qxe7 18 Rxd5 wins for White. This prompted Najdorf to suggest 13 . . . Nd5 14 Nxd5 Bxg5 15 Nc3 Nb4 as being all right for Black. Bronstein claims that the consequences of 13 . . . Nd5 are not so clear after 14 Nxd5 Bxg5 15 Nb6! Qxb6 (if 15 . . . Rb8 16 Nxg5 Qxg5? 17 Nd7+– or 15 . . . Ra7 16 d5! gives a very strong attack) 16 Nxg5 with unpleasant threats against Black's undefended king side, e.g. 16 . . . Nxd4 (not 16 . . . h6? 17 Nxf7! Rxf7 18 Qxe6 with a strong attack) 17 Qd3 Nf5 18 Nxe6 fxe6 19 Bxe6+ Kh8 20 Bxf5± so it seems that Black's position was in a bad state anyway, but the lesser evil appears to be 13 . . . Nd5.

Diagram 123

Fischer spurned 13 Bb5!? axb5 14 Qxa8 O–O presumably fearing that Black's two bishops and passed d-pawn would give him ample compensation for the exchange. Instead he gives a masterful illustration of how to capitalize on the enemy pawn weaknesses at a6 and d5—13 Re1! Qxa4 14 Nxa4 Be6 15 Be3 O–O (15 . . . Nd7 fighting over the c5 square is answered by 16 f4! g6 17 Bd4 with a grip on the dark squares) 16 Bc5! Fischer offers the exchange of dark-squared bishops so as to make it easier to attack the weak pawns on white squares for, as Bronstein says, '. . . a dark square weakness meant that the pieces on the light squares were also weak. The key to the attack on the dark squares was to occupy them with my forces, by which I attacked my

opponent's men on the light squares.' 16 . . . Rfe8 17 Bxe7 Rxe7 18 b4! (fixing the pawn at a6, because 18 . . . a5 is met by 19 b5 with a powerful passed pawn) 18 . . . Kf8 19 Nc5 Bc8 20 f3 Rea7 21 Re5 Bd7 22 Nxd7+! Typical Fischer! He exchanges his 'good' knight for the 'bad' bishop in order to gain entry squares on the c-file. 22 . . . Rxd7 23 Rc1 Rd6 (to stop 24 Rc6) 24 Rc7 Nd7 25 Re2 Black hardly has a decent move, so we give the rest of the game without comment 25 . . . g6 26 Kf2 h5 27 f4 h4 28 Kf3 f5 29 Ke3 d4+ 30 Kd2 Nb6 31 Ree7 Nd5 32 Rf7+ Ke8 33 Rb7 Nxb4 34 Bc4 resigns.

Diagram 124
White has a dominant knight on d5 and temporary control of the b-file; while Black's dark squares in the vicinity of his king are very weak, so Teichmann attempts to exchange dark-squared bishops—1 Bh4! Bd4+ (1 . . . Bc6 2 Nf6+ Bxf6 3 Bxf6 would leave Black defenceless on the a1–h8 diagonal) 2 Kh1 Kg7: this king move defends the f6 square, but shortens the black bishop's line of retreat. 3 Bf2 Bxf2 (3 . . . Be5? 4 f4 doesn't help) 4 Rxf2 Qa5 (trying to prevent 5 Qc3+) 5 Qe2 f6 6 Qb2! Now White controls both the a1–h8 diagonal and the b-file. 6 . . . Rf8 7 g4 h6 8 h4 g5 9 f4! White is hell-bent on attacking the f6-square. 9 . . . gxh4 10 Nxf6! and White soon won, since 10 . . . Rxf6 11 g5 is hopeless for Black.

RECOMMENDED READING

The author recommends the following books as being particularly useful for study, although the study of most chess books will prove instructive:

Kotov, A., *Think Like a Grandmaster* (Batsford, 1971)
Kotov, A., *Play Like a Grandmaster* (Batsford, 1978)
Chernev, I., *The most instructive games of Chess ever played* (Faber, 1965)
Bronstein, D., *The Chess Struggle in Practice* (Dover, 1979).
Kasparov, G., *The Test of Time* (Cadogan, 1986).
Polugayevsky, L., *Grandmaster Achievement* (Cadogan, 1994).
Webb, S., *Chess for Tigers* (Cadogan, 1992).

8 Chess Unlimited

Chess like music, like love, has the power to make men happy
—Tarrasch.

In this, the last chapter of the book we shall take a brief look at the lighter side of chess.

There are many facets to chess which ensure that the enthusiasts should never tire of this great game. For instance, chess can be played at differing speeds, with Blitz Chess at one extreme and Correspondence Chess at the other.

BLITZ CHESS

Blitz Chess is a popular pastime with nearly all chess players including the great Masters. In fact most top-class players pride themselves on the standard of their blitz play.

There are two different forms of blitz chess. One is the very popular 'five-minute' game, in which each player's clock is set at five minutes to the hour and the game must be completed before one of the flags falls, otherwise that player will have been deemed to have lost on time. Naturally it is possible to play ten-minute, fifteen-minute or whatever time control the players see fit. The fact that an unofficial World Blitz Championship was held in 1970 immediately after the USSR v Rest of the World match shows that the top Grandmasters take blitz chess seriously. Twelve of the world's top Grandmasters competed in an all-play-all five-minute tournament and the victor was the mercurial Bobby Fischer with a phenomenal 19 out of 22. Runner-up was the ex-World Champion Mikhail Tal with 14½ points, (4½ points behind) while further down the field were such illustrious names as Korchnoi, Petrosian, Bronstein, Hort, Smyslov and Reshevsky, to name but a few.

The other form of blitz chess is 'buzzer' or 'lightning' chess, in which a buzzer sounds every ten seconds (or whatever rate is preferred) and the player whose turn it is to move must move on the buzzer. This form of blitz chess is not as popular as five-minute chess and it is mainly played in England where there is, in fact, an annual British Lightning Championship.

The author strongly advises the ambitious student to make full use of 'five-minute' chess as a means of sharpening his quick play and as a general training aid for the study of various positions. Furthermore, blitz chess is great fun!

CORRESPONDENCE CHESS

Correspondence or postal chess is another very effective way of improving your game. Moves are posted back and forth between the players, who obviously have plenty of time to analyse the intricacies of an opening, middle game or even endgame position. Postal chess is very good for developing a methodical approach to your analysis of positions. One can write out a detailed analysis of certain positions at great length and this not only improves your understanding of the position, but also helps you to undertake your analysis in a logical and thorough fashion. Postal chess is also a good method of learning a new opening because one has plenty of time to learn the basic ideas behind that opening. Because correspondence chess takes quite a time (games usually take about a year and international games may take several years), most top correspondence players have ten to twenty games going at once; hence there are plenty of opportunities to learn and experiment.

The keen student is again advised to try postal chess to see if it suits him.

CHESS PROBLEMS AND STUDIES

Throughout a game of chess the two players are confronted with a series of problems, some specific and some general. General problems fall into the category of basic principles such as which pieces to exchange off and where to post one's pieces, etc. Specific problems on the other hand are of the nature: does Bxf3 result in the win of

material, or do I have a mating attack here? The solutions tend to be more concrete and we can often see a definite answer to the question. Consider the problem in Diagram 131: can White draw?

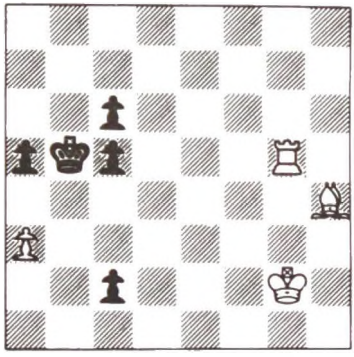


Diagram 131
H. K. Mattison

The reader might like to try and solve this one, and the solution will be given at the end of this section.

The world of chess problems and studies is quite vast, with solutions requiring mate, help-mate or even stalemate. The field of chess problem composition and solving is so complex that we will not attempt to do it justice here. The author recommends that the study of such problems should be conducted for enjoyment; their practical value is only evident for positions which have a strong resemblance to a serious 'game-like' position.

Solution to position 131 1 a4+ Kb6 (naturally not 1 . . . Kxa4 2 Rxc5 Kb3 3 Bg5; 1 . . . Kc4 2 Bf2 intending 3 Rxc5; 1 . . . Kb4 2 Be1+ Kc4 3 Bd2 when White draws at least, in all cases) 2 Bf2 c1 = Q 3 Rxc5 Qxc5 (Any queen move is met by a rook discovered check winning the queen) 4 Kh1!! (Black is in zugzwang and must capture the bishop on f2) 4 . . . Qxf2 stalemate!

CHESS LITERATURE

There are literally thousands of chess publications and it is well known that more books have been published on chess than all the other games in the world put together. With such a plethora of chess books to choose from, the student finds himself in the difficult position of having to be selective. Chess is an international game and

knowledge of algebraic notation will enable the reader to read games in various languages, although he may not be able to read the notes. The English-speaking chess world has the advantage since a great many books are published in English.

To help the student decide which books to consult the author gives a short bibliography of recommended reading. The reader is advised to buy or consult the following books, which are classified according to the three stages of chess:

Opening

A. Matanovic (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (Informator) vols A–E. (These five volumes are very expensive and are best used as reference works.)

In addition, the Cadogan and Batsford series of chess openings books are particularly useful.

Middle Game

A. Nimzowitsch *My System* (Bell, 1929).
R. Fischer *My 60 Memorable Games* (Faber, 1969).
E. Agur *Bobby Fischer: His Approach to Chess* (Cadogan, 1992).

There are many other books worth reading on the middle game. These, plus those mentioned on page 170, were of great interest to the author and it is hoped that the reader may also derive some benefit from them. It should be emphasized that any collection of games from one of the all-time greats, such as Alekhine, Capablanca, Lasker, Tarrasch, Fischer, Spassky, Tal, Karpov, Korchnoi, Kasparov etc. will be a useful training aid.

Endgame

P. Keres *Practical Chess Endings* (Batsford, 1974).
Y. Averbakh *Chess Endings: Essential Knowledge* (Cadogan, 1993).
R. Fine *Basic Chess Endings* (Bell, 1941).

CHESS MAGAZINES

Apart from the thousands of books on chess, there are many magazines in many different languages. Some of the more interesting ones are:

CHESS AND COMPUTERS

Perhaps one of the most exciting developments in chess over the past ten years has been the effect that computers are having on the game. In the main this has been in two areas, the development of chess-playing programs and the use of chess databases.

Chess-playing programs have improved so much these days that the serious player can find them quite testing, particularly at blitz speeds where the computers are beginning to get the better of leading Grandmasters such as Short, Anand, Kramnik and even the current World Champion Garry Kasparov! This is one reason why FIDE have now adopted a policy of having international tournament games played to a finish with no adjournments, thus preventing computers from being used to conduct adjournment analysis. The current FIDE recommendation for time controls is 40 moves in 2 hours, then 20 moves in the next hour, followed by an extra hour each to finish the game, thus making an eight-hour playing session in total.

These chess-playing programs can either be purchased to run on a PC or as a dedicated Chess Computer. Leading programs at the present time include Fritz 3, MChess Professional, Chess Genius, HIARCS Master and Rebel 6.0. Leading chess-playing computers include TASC R30, Genius, the Mephisto range, the Novag range and the Saitek/Kasparov range. Choosing a chess computer is a difficult decision and it is worth getting advice from one of the established chess suppliers.

The serious student should certainly consider investing in a chess computer of some description as they can assist in the analysis of variations as well as providing an ever-willing opponent. The only trouble is, they don't get despondent if and when you beat them, nor do they get tired, so watch out!

Chess databases have revolutionized the way many players now prepare for tournament or even club games! Databases can be purchased with vast numbers of games, making it possible to research a favoured opening variation or the games of a particular opponent. This facility is becoming increasingly important, as the sheer volume of chess games being played around the world is increasing dramatically. Indeed there have been many instances of top players springing the 'latest move', which was perhaps played a few days earlier on the other side of the world, on an unsuspecting opponent!

These databases run on most PCs and it is quite common for top players to take a lap-top computer on their travels. The leading databases include ChessBase (now available in a 'Windows' format), NICBASE (the *New in Chess* database), and Chess Assistant (a relatively new Russian program). Most cost around £200 ($300) and come with anything between 20,000 up to 250,000 games! Once you have made the initial investment in one of these databases, you can continually add to it with sets of games from various tournaments, on certain openings, or about certain players. Another useful aspect of a database is that you can input any games you like including your own, thus keeping a record of your own results. This allows you a quick and easy way of analysing your record with certain openings or against certain opponents.

1. *Chess Informant* vols 1–61. These are published three times a year and contain around 600 complete games with notes. It is an international publication with no language—very good value for the serious player.
2. *British Chess Magazine.* Available from The Chess Shop, 69 Masbro Road, Kensington, London W14 0LS.
3. *Chess.* Available from Chess and Bridge Ltd., 369 Euston Road, London NW1 3AR.
4. *New in Chess* Magazine. A Dutch publication (in English) which appears six times a year and contains excellent tournament reports, annotations and interviews with leading players. New in Chess also issue quarterly *Yearbooks* in language-less notation which survey fashionable opening variations.
5. *Chess Life.* The leading American monthly. Available from USCF, 186 Route 9W, New Windsor, NY 12553, USA.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Although chess ranks as the most complex game in the world (a *conservative* estimate has shown that 25×10^{115} different chess games are possible!), there are still those who like to experiment with the many fascinating offshoots of chess. We shall briefly examine a few of these hybrids in case the reader wants some light entertainment.

1. 'Must-take' (Suicide) Chess

In this crazy game the object is simply to lose your pieces as quickly as possible! Captures are imperative, although if there is more than

one, then naturally you may choose. The first player to lose all his pieces, including his king, is the winner.

2. Progressive Chess

This is a very entertaining game in which White plays one move, Black *two* consecutive moves; White then has *three* consecutive moves, and so on. The object is to checkmate as normal, but any check in a sequence of moves concludes that sequence, e.g. if you have five moves and check on your third move, then you forfeit the other two moves.

3. Cylindrical Chess

In this game the pieces move in exactly the same fashion, but the board is considered to be a hollow cylinder: that is the a and h files are adjacent, but the first and eighth ranks are *not* in contact, otherwise the rooks would be able to capture each other. A miniature could go as follows—1 f4?! g6 2 h4 Bg7 3h5?? c5 +! (check along the d8–a5–h4–e1 diagonal!) 4 Rh4 Qxh4 + 5 g3 Qxg3 mate.

4. Kriegspiel

Kriegspiel is one of the more popular chess variants. Three chess sets are required—each of the two players has a set to himself, and a referee controls a master board. The two players play normal chess except neither has knowledge of his opponent's moves. The referee maintains the actual position on his master board which is out of view of both players. The players move in turn when the referee tells them that their opponent has moved. If a capture is made, then the piece is removed from the board of the player who lost the piece, and the other player is informed that he has made a capture—but is not told what piece he has captured. If a check is given, both players are informed and the referee specifies whether the check is along a rank, file or diagonal, or by a knight. A player can make various inferences from the moves that he is allowed to play as well as those that the referee will not allow (the illegal moves). To save time, a popular question is, 'Are there any pawn captures?' If there are, the referee replies, 'Try' and the player must try at least one pawn capture. Otherwise the referee will reply 'No'. Pawn captures by en passant are announced by the referee once they have been played.

It is customary for the opponents to sit back to back with the master

set between them, and the stage is set for the battle of luck and logic to begin.

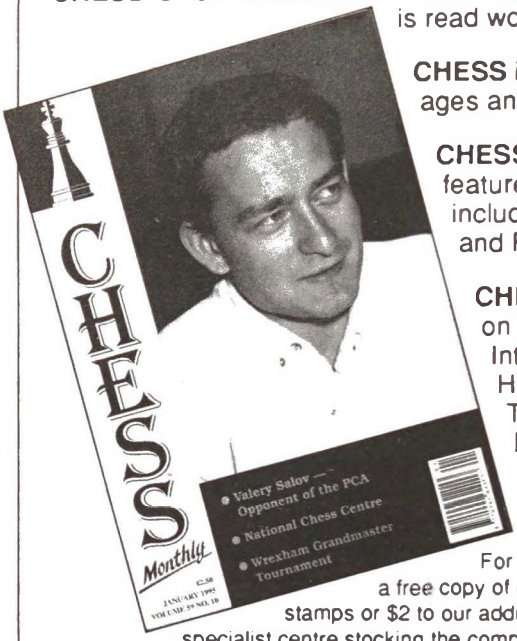
Although there are numerous other hybrids of chess, such as hexagonal chess, pocket-knight chess, exchange chess, to name but a few, we shall leave it to the reader to discover the wonders of this incredible game for himself.

The author hopes that this brief chapter has shown the keen devotee, that although chess can be taken very seriously (and should be if you are ambitious!) it also has a lighter side, which can bring hours of enjoyment. This should come as no surprise; after all chess is a game—and what a game!!

'CHESS' MONTHLY MAGAZINE

"... now one of the world's most colourful and lively chess reviews, and chess enthusiasts would derive excellent practice from the very tough puzzles set each month." **The Times**

CHESS is now established as Britain's No 1 chess magazine and is read world wide.



CHESS is written for players of all ages and standards.

CHESS carries top quality features by Grandmasters, including Adams, Hodgson, King and Flear.

CHESS has regular features on Opening Theory, International News, How Good is Your Chess?, Tournament Reports, Book Reviews, Computer Chess - and much more!

For a sample issue of **'CHESS'**, and a free copy of our catalogue, please send £1 in stamps or $2 to our address in London. This is a specialist centre stocking the complete range of Cadogan chess titles, plus chess computers and software, chess sets and boards, chess clocks, score sheets and other equipment. It is also a tournament venue.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

FOR 12 ISSUES PER YEAR				
UK	1 year	£24.95	2 years	£47.50
EUROPE	1 year	£33.95	2 years	£65.00
USA/CANADA	1 year	$55.00	2 years	$105.00
REST OF WORLD (Airmail)	1 year	£49.95 ($85.00)	2 years	£95.00 ($155.00)
REST OF WORLD (Surface)	1 year	£33.95 ($65.00)	2 years	£65.00 ($110.00)

Payment by cheque or credit card with number/expiry date.
Add £6 ($12) if not drawn on UK bank or UK branch of foreign bank.

CHESS & BRIDGE LTD, 369 EUSTON ROAD, LONDON NW1 3AR.

London's Chess and Bridge Centre

Tel: 071-388 2404 Fax: 071-388 2407

CHESS *Training*

NIGEL POVAH

Global standards of chess are improving all the time – there are now over 20 International Grandmasters in Britain alone, and this number increases annually. The author attributes this progress to improvement in the playing strength of young players, nurtured on a highly competitive tournament circuit and provided with expert coaching. This entertaining and instructive book uses the author's own tried and tested training methods and is ideal for any player in the 100-160 BCF (1400-1900 ELO/USCF) grading range.

- Covers all phases of the game
- Includes dozens of practical illustrative examples
- Plenty of general advice for tournament competitors
- Ideal for the improving player

Nigel Povah is an International Master at over-the-board play and Grandmaster at correspondence chess who has taught chess in schools, Adult Education classes and by individual tuition. His past pupils include Grandmaster Daniel King and several other leading players.